GREAT FACTS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

My Mother in Heaven,

WHOSE KISS IS ON MY BROW, AND WHOSE

IMAGE IS IN MY HEART,

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME.

PREFACE.

THE following chapters were originally sermons and were preached at different times during the past two years to the congregation of First Presbyterian Church. This fact accounts for occasional repetition of ideas, which the writer did not wholly remove when changing, enlarging, and arranging them under a general theme. The original discourses proved helpful to many in his congregation; and it is his earnest prayer that through the medium of this little volume, they may prove in their present form a blessing to the souls of others.

GEORGE B. McLEOD.

Truro, Nova Scotia, Canada,
November, 1904.

INTRODUCTORY.

THIS is a book of fundamentals. God, Christ, the life now present, the life to come—these are the themes. They are the themes that never lose interest; they touch that which is deepest and most worth while—God in life, and life in God, and for God. And the treatment corresponds. The writer has read much, has thought long and deeply, has translated his thinking into strenuous living. He speaks out of the fulness of experience. It is this which gives these chapters their hold. They are as far removed as may be from cold logic, although the argument is well knit; and from mere literary charm, although there is an unusual wealth of apt quotation and allusion. They glow, too, with that fine enthusiasm of soul which comes only from personal reverence and love for the great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and love for the souls of all brother men. The discourses cannot be read without making life a loftier, deeper, nobler thing.

R. DOUGLAS FRASER.

Toronto, January, 1905.

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CHAPTER I.

THE FACT OF GOD

GREAT FACTS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING.

CHAPTER I.

THE FACT OF GOD.

In one of his essays Mr. Frederick Myers tells of an evening spent in Trinity College, Cambridge, listening to the brilliant conversation of George Eliot on the great themes of God, Immortality and Duty. With her "grave, majestic countenance" turned towards his like a "sibyl's in the gloom," she declared in language eloquent, impressive, that God was inconceivable, Immortality unbelievable, but that Duty was "peremptory and absolute." And when they parted under a starless sky he "seemed to be gazing, like Titus at Jerusalem, on vacant seats and empty halls, on a sanctuary with no person to hallow it, and heaven left lonely of a God."

Nothing in the infinite spaces but the stars,

and the silence, and the sleep. Man has studied the spectrum of the stars, the chemistry of suns, the atmosphere of planets, and God is no longer needed in the universe. The world is automatic. God is the uniformity of physical law. Man's future is a coffin. We have been calling unto God in vain. Prayer is a delusion; heaven is empty; the grave is dark; sin abides; death reigns; and immortality is a dream.

Is the picture too dark? Then close your volume of Positivism and open your Bible. It is written all over with the great thoughts of Duty, Immortality, God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." That is God in causality. "I know that my Redeemer liveth." That is God in consciousness. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." That is God in Christ. Causality, consciousness, Christ—these three. But the greatest of these is Christ.

I.

CAUSALITY.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—GEN. 1. 1.

THE Bible does not argue the existence of God. It takes that for granted. Man did not create God. He came to him with the awakening of the religious instincts. Then blindly groping after the Infinite, man sought Deity everywhere, in sun, and stars, and shimmering sea, streams, woods, and fountains. He looked out upon the universe and questioned its origin —material or spiritual? The Greek philosophers found its origin in fire, in air, in water, in numbers, in atoms, in thought, in reason, and in the good. But the writer of the book of Genesis finds the origin of all things in God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

That is the sublimest statement ever made concerning the origin of things. But who by searching can find out God? Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? Were it possible to reduce the Infinite to the finite, were it possible to comprehend God behind the

mechanism of the universe, man would become discontented at the disclosure of his own limitations. It is in the striving after the unattained that man finds growth. It is when his reach exceeds his grasp that man makes progress. We cannot comprehend God; but we cannot do without Him. Belief in God may be contrary to opinion; but it is not contrary to reason. It is rational that every effect should have a cause. The only cause adequate to account for the universe is the God of the Book of Genesis.

> "In youth I looked to those very skies,
> And probing their immensities
> I found God there, His visible power."

Napoleon was one night walking the deck of his ship. It was a glorious night. The stars were flashing in myriad jewelled splendor. His officers, nearby, were discussing the origin of things. Materialism was in the air. Suddenly Napoleon stopped and, with a sweep of his hand across the sky, he exclaimed: "Gentlemen, you may say what you please, but who made all this?" Was it blind chance set the stars in the sky, and rolled the planets on their orbits? The laws of the universe are mathematical relations, circles, parabola, ellipses,

curves, chemical combinations. It takes mind to investigate these relations; surely it took mind to produce them.

"Forty years ago," says Lord Kelvin, better known as Sir William Thompson, "I asked Liebig if he believed that the grasses and the flowers that we saw around us grew by mere chemical forces." "Certainly not," he replied, "no more than I could believe that a book of botany describing them could grow by mere chemical forces." Folly to talk of "the fortuitous concourse of atoms." The notes of the diatonic scale do not arrange themselves into beautiful compositions without a composer. The letters of the alphabet do not come together into poems without the personality of the poet. Bricks do not tumble into palaces without a designer. Colors do not grow into pictures, nor marbles into statues, without the touch of the artist. The violin sheds no showers of music without the hand of the cunning player. And are we to believe that suns and worlds and systems, the poetry of the heavens, the music of the spheres, are but the work of chance? Order and adaptation there are everywhere. The eye for vision, the ear for hearing, the lungs for breathing, the wing for air, the fin for water. It is said that evolution shows that is not bene-

ficent purpose that we see, but the survival of the fittest; that organism must become adapted to environment or suffer extinction. But evolution without God is meaningless. Philosophy goes beyond evolution and tells us of a Universal Substance, an Eternal Energy. Deepen the contents of the terms and we have Divine Intelligence, Personality, God.

What can power without personality accomplish? What has it ever accomplished in the realm of industry, art, science, invention, discovery? Can it make a statue with Phidias, a Hamlet with Shakespeare, a cathedral with Wren, an oratorio with Handel, a painting with Turner, a telephone with Edison, or practise bloodless surgery with Adolph Lorenz? It can do none of these things. Blind, it cannot see; deaf, it cannot hear; heartless, it cannot love; brainless, it cannot think. It may crush and grind; but it builds no hospitals, sets no broken limbs, binds up no wounded hearts, changes no sorrow into joy, works no miracles of regeneration, and carves no crosses into crowns of character. It has no more creative and directive power than has a toy-man with phonograph for voice, mask for face, lens for eye, and electric battery for heart and brain.

It is personality that counts. It breathes in

the changing expressions of the face; flashes from the eye of the leader of men; is vibrant in the speech of the orator; thrills and throbs in the voice of the sweet singer, and from heart and brain of poet, parent, preacher, philanthropist, patriot, reformer, statesman, philosopher, it pours a wealth of power into human life. Behind all literature, art, architecture, music, philanthropy, religion, is the power of personality. And the Power that creates and directs the world is the Personality of God.

Lord Kelvin, than whom there is no greater scientist in England or America, asserts that "science positively affirms Creative Power, and compels us to believe in an influence other than physical, dynamical or electrical forces." It may be urged that his science is colored by his religion. Even so; the fact remains that he finds nothing in his science to contradict his consciousness of God. Sir Oliver Lodge bears similar testimony. Edison, the greatest discoverer of the age, holds fast by his belief in a Supreme Intelligence. Keats complained that his name was writ in water. Some would have us believe that man's nature is writ in mud. Like Hamlet they go about with "veiled eyelids" looking for their Father in the dust. If

they would but look around them and above them they might see God

"In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul, in the clod."

His footsteps are on the rocks. His voice is in the rolling of the thunder. His strength is in the storm. "He makes the clouds His chariots, and floats upon the wings of the wind." The glory of the universe is but the shimmering of His garments as He passes by. Winds and waves, stars and stones, "green vales and icy cliffs," and all things material in sea, and earth, and sky, thunder forth the opening words of Genesis, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

II.

CONSCIOUSNESS.

"I know that my Redeemer liveth."—Job 19. 25.

Causality leads to God. But shorter than the way of flowers, rocks and stars is the way of consciousness. "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The testimony of divinity is within a man's own soul, in the great facts of morality, religion—divine lines of light in the spectrum of human life. "There are states," says Plutarch, "without walls, without laws, without coins, without writing; but a people without a god, without prayers, without religious exercises and sacrifices no man has ever seen." The religious instincts of the race feel after the Infinite as the tendrils of the vine feel after wall and trellis.

Two things awakened the reverence of Kant, "the *Starry Heaven* above, and the *Moral Law* within." What is the meaning of that law? Hath wing any meaning apart from air, or fin from water, or the migratory instinct of the bird apart from climate? And what does moral obligation mean apart from

God? Is there not truth in the words of the poet Browning:

> "The sense within me that I owe a debt
> Assures me somewhere must be someone
> Ready to take his due. All comes to this—
> Where due is, there acceptance follows: find
> Him who accepts his due; and why look far?"

We have not far to look. God is not far from every one of us. Take God and Immortality from creed, as did George Eliot, and duty will be rent asunder in the process.

No refutation of this statement is it to point to the morality of men like Huxley, Darwin, or Spencer. They were the product of the Christianity they rejected. They were environed by it. They could not escape from its influence. But let an atheistical atmosphere pervade not only the studies of a few great thinkers, but our universities, our colleges, our warerooms, our workshops, our offices, our homes; and while many of the social virtues would doubtless be retained there would be such a rending of the ethical code as would appal us. No creed can live without supernatural sanction. The plant of duty cannot blossom except in the soil of Divinity. Did not George Eliot and Matthew Arnold in literature, and Mr. Spencer in philosophy, try to patch up a

creed upon a rationalistic basis. But others coming after could not see that duty was "peremptory and absolute." Morality became irksome. Rationalism opened the door to naturalism. A fleshly school of poetry and prose arose. Men turned from God to Omar Khayyam for inspiration. Cynicism flaunted itself in fleshly novels. And a brilliant English poet sang:

> "To say of shame, What is it?
> Of virtue, We may miss it;
> Of sin, We may but kiss it,
> And it's no longer sin."

Conscience, Duty, God are not in the crucible of the chemist. Theology may change. But changing theories affect not facts. No theory of light can affect the blossoming, fruiting, mellowing power of the sun. No theory of astronomy can affect the stars. Geology changes; but the earth abides. Psychologies pass; but the mental faculties remain. Creeds may undergo revision; but conscience is real, duty imperative, and moral ideals are authoritative. Critics may rage and rationalists may imagine a vain thing; but the testimony of divinity is within a man's own soul, and with Job he may say: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The shadows of the night had

gathered around the old patriarch. The way was rough and dark. The problem of suffering was insoluble. But he knew that God was near. It was not blind feeling, but a conviction of the soul so strong, so clear, that the critical judgment could not touch it.

The deepest convictions are beyond the grip of chemist or biologist. It provokes a smile as we read of Professor Tyndall's test of the value of prayer. He would place a number of patients in separate wards, make one group the subject of special prayer and the other of medical treatment, and then note which would recover the first. Spiritual things are not to be experimented with like measles or consumption. They are beyond the grip of scientific tests. Science alone cannot scale the heights of truth and bring God down. Philosophy may not find Him

> "In world or sun,
> Or eagle's wing or insect's eye;
> Nor through the questions men may try,
> The petty cob-webs we have spun."

But there is another way. It is the way of consciousness. It is the intuitive knowledge of the soul that discovers the presence of God in the moral and religious life of man. It is the appeal which the "Sky Pilot" makes when

beaten in an argument as to the existence of God.

"I cannot see my way through!" he exclaims. "But I am right! It's true! I feel it's true! Men cannot live without God and be men!"

That is a conviction hard to uproot. Men feel it and know it. We cannot live without God and be men. Pulverize a man's opinions with the hammer of logic, but his convictions abide. To every argument of the speculative reason that would annihilate faith the heart answers: "I have felt." It is a valid appeal, not to feeling as such, but to "the man in men," to character, personality, experience, to "the testimony of the best men at their best moments, when their vision was the clearest." It is God's revelation to the soul, the Divinity of consciousness, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

III.

CHRIST.

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."—JOHN 14. 9.

CAUSALITY, consciousness, Christ—these three; but the greatest of these is Christ. Faith needs form. Primitive man sought God in pictures. The Jews had the ark. The Christian has the Man Christ Jesus. Apart from Christ faith weakens and effort wanes. Blot out the historic Christ and "it seems almost a certainty that in the course of time the soul of Christian truth would fade into dimness, flicker fitfully, and perhaps vanish altogether." The seat of religious authority is not solely in consciousness. "The inward experience isolated cannot always maintain itself." Jesus confirms the testimony of the soul, and takes us beyond causality, consciousness, inference, logic and Old Testament revelation to our Father God, caring for the lilies and the sparrows, sharing in the sorrows of the world, bearing the Cross, looking into the wistful faces of His children, and saying: "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto

your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

A few years ago when Rudyard Kipling was suffering from pneumonia in the city of New York, his nurse, noticing a movement of his lips, asked him if he wished for anything.

"I want my Heavenly Father," he replied. "Only He can help me now. I was speaking to my God."

"O papa, it's so dark," said a little child, as she nestled her head upon the pillow, "won't you take my hand, and turn your face towards me?" Despite the sneer of the sceptic that God having created man in His own image, man has ever since been returning the compliment by making God in his, we look for the Hand that guides, and the Face that shines between us and the night. "Lord show us the Father." The answer is the Incarnation.

"A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me
Thou shalt love, and be loved by, forever; a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of a new life to thee; see the Christ stand."

How otherwise could God reveal Himself? He shows His power in the whirlwind, in the

earthquake, in the thunder, in the storm, and in all the mighty forces of the universe. But personality can find expression only in a life. God shines in the stars, and man becomes an astronomer. He reveals Himself in the flowers, and man becomes a botanist. He lives in the beauty of the world, and man becomes a poet. He hides Himself in the mysteries of existence, and man becomes a philosopher. He manifests Himself in a life, and man becomes a teacher, a philanthropist, a reformer. The great uplifting agency of humanity has ever been the man who has seen a clearer vision of truth than his fellows, whose noble thoughts have been forged in the white heat of conviction, welded in the fires of opposition, and who has not shrunk from self-sacrifice in giving his message to the world. But if God would redeem man from the power of sin, and transform him into His own image, He must come into life, not as He has ever been coming in the lives of the great teachers of the world, but as the Gospel tells us that He came in the life of the Son of Man, who is also Son of God.

Even the Old Testament conception of God, where beat the warm heart of Divinity, attracted few worshippers outside of Judaism; but "before Deity embodied in a human form,

walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping o'er their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the Cross, the prejudice of the synagogue, the doubts of the Academy, the pride of the portico, the forces of the lictors, and the swords of thirty legions were buried in the dust." Theism lacks the moving power of the Cross. Logic does not touch like experience. Religion is cold until it is kindled by a Saviour's love. Moral philosophy with its abstractions is ice compared with the Fatherhood of God.

A young man once wrote to Henry Ward Beecher: "I am sinking down into the depths of shame. Preach the terrors of hell to me. Preach anything that will save me. I shall be at your church next Sabbath evening." "That night I preached about the Fatherhood of God," says Beecher, "I felt if that would not save him nothing would." Jesus proclaimed the Fatherhood of God in parable, in sermon and in prayer. God is more than a judge with criminal code, witnesses, and penalties. He is a Father in His household, waiting for the prodigal, listening for the hand that knocks and the voice that calls. "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

The late Coventry Patmore tells us that his little child, having committed some offence, was punished, and went sobbing to his bed. The father's heart was intensely pained. Entering the room he found the little fellow asleep with the contents of his pockets—counters, shells, and copper coins, a bottle with bluebells, and a red-veined stone—set out around him. He had sought to comfort himself with these childish trifles. The pathos of the situation moved the father's heart to tears, and gave him a glimpse into the Fatherly heart of God.

"So when that night I prayed
To God, I wept and said:
Ah! when at last we lie with tranced breath,
Not vexing thee in death,
And Thou rememberest with what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then Fatherly not less
Than I, whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath and say:
'I will be sorry for their childishness.'"

Thank God for a humanized theology. "As a father pitieth his children." But pity is not weakness. Fatherhood is not synonymous with loose parental authority. God is no "magnified Eli," says Ian Maclaren. "The

Father of the Sermon on the Mount is not less awful than the God of the Ten Words." Jesus, the compassionate, uttered the severest denunciations against the shams and hypocrisies of life. How terrible His indictment of the Pharisees. Does He speak of many mansions? He also speaks of fires of Gehenna. He has something to say in the government of the world. Sin brings its own punishment. Selfishness disintegrates and destroys. It is as certain as gravitation, as right as the law of God. It has the sanction of the Father. "The Lord of the vineyard will destroy the husbandmen and give the vineyard to others." But, oh, the pathos and the tears of that heart-touching cry: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thee as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but thou wouldst not." Behind the Moral Governor is the Father caring for His creatures, the sparrow, the prodigal, the penitent disciple. "The very hairs of your head are numbered." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God." Music from discord, beauty from ugliness, peace from pain.

Was Jesus too optimistic? Is His optimism

compatible with the facts of life? God cares for the falling sparrow. But the sparrow falls, and its little heart lies pulseless in the sleet and snow. Greater care hath He for man than for birds. "Are ye not much better than they?" But Stephen is stoned, Peter is crucified, John is exiled, Herod murders James and Nero Paul. Long is the roll of martyrdom. Dark is the history of wars, of pestilence, of famine. The cruelties of life are great. The rich oppress the poor; the strong the weak; the innocent suffer with the guilty. Nature, "red in tooth and claw," would seem to deny the paternal government of God. "If I had created such a world," said one, "the sense of its sufferings would break my heart." In the thought of another the Creator must be "lacking either in Omnipotence or in goodness." "If God is love," said one, as I stood beside the coffin of her brother, "why did he allow him to suffer so? He suffered so terribly before he died." It is the question of humanity. Where is the Fatherhood of God?

> "Wherefore should any evil hap to man,
> From ache of flesh to agony of soul,
> Since God's All-Mercy mates All-Potency?"

But Jesus interprets God. What Christ did God did. Can God be merciful? He that hath

seen Jesus hath seen His mercy. Christ's presence was a benediction. Love lived in His smiles, flowed in His tears, breathed in His words, and found expression in His healing touch. He saw the moral evil of the world as we can never see it, but never lost faith in the moral government of God. It never entered His thought that suffering was incompatible with a God of love. He Himself took the way of suffering and on the Cross He called God Father. Through suffering He came unto His own. Confronting the puzzling, baffling, bewildering, circumstances of life, He says: "In your patience possess your souls." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Do we bitterly complain that

> "Clouds obscure;
> But for which obscuration all were bright?
> Too hastily concluded! Sun-diffused,
> A cloud may soothe the eye made blind by blaze,—
> Better the very clarity of light."

Pain hath its sanctuary of purification. Sorrow hath its ministry of healing. The world shall yet roll out of the night of sin and sorrow and faith shall be crowned with the light and peace of God.

I sat one day beside a little child, now in heaven. "Papa tell me a story." I told him

a story with a bright, joyous ending. "Tell me another." I told him another with a touch of sadness at its close. With quivering lips, and eyes suffused with tears, he said: "I do not wish to hear that again." I asked him why. He replied: "Because it is too sad."

That is the thought of more than little children. We do not wish the story to end sadly. We would see sunshine after clouds, calm after storm, peace after pain. We demand it in literature. We expect it in life. Life is weary without God. There is no examination of its mysteries apart from Jesus Christ. But he that hath seen the Christ, hath looked up into the loving face of his Father; and the seeing-soul is satisfied.

. . . . . .

Everything, however, depends upon how we see. There are those who see, and do not see. There are those who see, and remain blind.

The late Dr. Grant, of Kingston, tells of one who had just visited the educational institutions of the Old World. Asked as to his impressions, he replied: "Oh, we are away ahead of them in everything." "I said nothing," adds the Doctor. "What could I say, in the face of such blindness and stupidity?"

The trained mind hath visions deeper than

the eye of flesh. Some things are seen only by the eye of genius. Generations saw falling apples, escaping steam, playing lightning, and swinging lamps. But Newton saw gravitation in the falling apple. Watt saw motive power in escaping steam. Franklin saw electricity in the clouds. Galileo saw the pendulum in the swinging of a lamp. It took the genius of Turner to see the grandeur of the landscape; and the genius of Shakespeare to see the drama of humanity. The poetic soul of Shelley, kindred spirit with the wind and storm, saw to the very heart of beauty and of melody. Genius sees the principles of things and discovers the secrets of nature and of man. But genius cannot read the secrets of God. Some of the finest utterances upon human life have been made by men who have openly avowed their unbelief in God. It requires the mystic touch of faith to unseal the blind eye and bid men see. "There is an optic nerve," says Dr. Burrell, "that lies dormant until God touches and thrills it." "I know Christ," says Browning, "by the direct glance of the soul's seeing, as the eye sees light." Jesus purifies the heart, clarifies the vision, reveals the beauty of truth, the exaltation of virtue, and through this purified medium the soul sees God.

Christianity, like a cathedral window, must be studied from within. A snap-shot of criticism from without is beyond the mark. Science can give no adequate account of the universe except on its physical side, and its devotee is apt to ignore facts that are not in his line of investigation. He may be great in scholarship, great in science, great in philosophy, great in a professorial chair; but if he has so fixed his eye upon the material as to starve the spiritual side of his nature what claim has he to speak with authority on matters religious?

Familiar is the story of Darwin, who in his younger days keenly appreciated poetry, painting, music. Hours did he spend in the delightful study of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Scott and Milton. But pursuing natural science he lost his appreciation of the beautiful in art. Shakespeare became dull. Music lost its charm. The exquisite paintings of Turner were robbed of their loveliness. Disqualified was he as a critic of art. Disqualified is the man as a critic of religion whose spiritual faculties have been blunted or destroyed. How can some Huxley, who does not even believe in God, judge fairly the Person of the Master? He does not see beyond the cords, the pulleys, and the mechanism of the historical stage. The

life of Jesus escapes him. We will listen to his science, respect his philosophy, honor his scholarship, but will dismiss him as a spiritual guide. Spiritual things are beyond the province of the laboratory. They are spiritually discerned—a revelation, inspiration, life. The soul possesses God as the flower possesses sunlight and fragrance. Prove it mathematically? No. Demonstrate it as a proposition in Euclid? No. "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

The deepest things in life are beyond the realm of mathematics. The fragrance of the rose evades [illegible]s and classification. No process of disse[illegible] of the vocal organs of the song-sparrow or of the hermit thrush can help to an appreciation of their songs. The beauty of the sunset, the glory of the indescribable corona, are beyond any discussion of the properties of light, dust-particles and meteoroids. A mother's love is not reducible to analytical tests. The love of God transcends metaphysical formulæ. Fragrance, beauty, love are killed in the analysis. There are some things that I do not wish to analyze. I would rather hear and see and feel and know. Let me breathe the fragrance of the rose, and feast the eye upon its

beauty. Let me lie upon the grass with my face towards the sky, and listen to the liquid notes of the song-sparrow in the nearby thicket, or to the choral song of the sweet-voiced thrush, pouring forth its little heart in evening hymn. Let me stand, as in the workroom of the Creator, and behold the beauty of sunset and corona. Let me feel the power of a mother's love. I cannot measure it by rule or weigh it in a balance. But her kiss is on my brow and her image is in my heart, and I know and understand. The love of God may also become a fact in experience. The heart may feel the attractive power of the Personality of Jesus. He reconciles the sinner to his God. He lays hold of the sympathies, draws out the affections, quickens the conscience, and governs character and conduct, until the soul sings:

"O love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul on Thee;
And give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean's depths its flow
May richer, fuller be."

How easy to illustrate. Upon the pages of memory there is the picture of an old lady, with care-worn face, and bending form, telling of a life of bitterness and sorrow. She might have said: "Call me not Naomi, but call me

Mara, for the Lord hath dealt very bitterly with me." The grave had claimed her sons. It was not the cemetery of her fathers, where she might have gone to plant a flower or to drop the tribute of a tear. She was denied even this poor consolation. They were sleeping in the grave of the stranger. But into her heart had come the peace that passeth understanding. She had found Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. In Him life's broken threads were united, earth's tears were dried, and the aching heart was satisfied. God had touched her life, and with Job she could say: "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Let the sceptic go to such an one and tell her that the old-fashioned ideas of religion are exploded; that we have great telescopes, microscopes, spectroscopes, but that we cannot find God in the universe; that there are chemists and biologists who agree that if God exists He is the Great Unknown.

I fancy I see the old face lighting with a smile, as she replies: "I know nothing of chemists and biologists, but I know God. I have never looked through telescope or microscope, but there is a nearer way to the Heart of our Father. If you have not found Him in

star and stone, I have found Him in my trouble. He has been my companion on the lonely way. He has been my strength in weakness, light in darkness, peace in pain. He has been 'a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'"

The appeal is valid. It is an appeal to Christian consciousness, to the wealth of Christian experience, which is shot through and through with knowledge. Prove it mathematically? No. Proof is a process. The vision of faith is immediate, and, therefore, knows no proof. It is the witness of the Christ of experience to the Fatherhood of God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

CHAPTER II.

THE FACT OF CHRIST

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THE FACT OF CHRIST.

"Whom say ye that I am? Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God."—MATT. 16. 16, 17.

THE greatest fact of history is Christ. His claim to be Divine is supported by His morals and His ministry. The verdict of the most searching criticism is, no flaw, no failure, no mistake. Divinity lives in His ministry of transformation, of healing, and of light. His words have outlived the centuries. They exercise a softening influence upon the hard outlines of human life. They fall upon the soul with the gentle influence of the sunshine and the dew, awakening into life a harvest of new feelings and desires. Weary of sin, they tell us of forgiveness. Sick and tired of the sordidness of life, they heal and soothe. Blinded by the mists of passion and of prejudice, they clarify the vision. And when the world of pleasure and of profit grips hard the mind and heart they bring us back to saner judgment and

to purer feeling. Truly marvellous are the words of the Son of Man.

Jesus, moreover, is more than a messenger. He is the Message. His teaching is not centred in a system of ethics or theology, but in His Person. He came not saying: "What think ye of God? What think ye of the Bible? What think ye of the Church? What think ye of the moral worth of man?" But He came saying: "What think ye of *Me*?" He claimed to be the Revelation of God, the Head of the Church, the Word made Flesh, the Revelator of man's moral worth. He did not stand outside the truth and point the way, but He said: "I am the Way and the Truth." He looked into the faces of the suffering, the sorrowing, and the sinning, and bade them come unto Him for the satisfaction of their needs. "Are you hungry? I will feed you. Are you thirsty? I will give you drink. Are you in darkness? I will give you light. Are you weary? Come unto Me and I will give you rest." No other teacher—Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Moses—ever claimed to be divine. But to Jesus it seemed the proper thing to do. "Whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God," says Peter. Jesus accepts this confession of faith in His divinity. Six

months later, having publicly made this claim, He was put to death. But His disciples say that He arose from the dead. They say they saw Him. They were not expecting Him. They would not believe the story of the Resurrection until they were convinced by proof. To their testimony is added the testimony of Paul. He, too, saw Jesus. Critics explain Paul's changed life by a sunstroke, mental wanderings, poetry, rhetoric, legend, myth. But character cannot be transformed by a sunstroke and delusions heal no troubled conscience. Poetry and rhetoric do not fortify men to endure scars, scourging, imprisonment, death. Legends do not grow up in a quarter of a century, yet within that period letters of Paul, admitted by the critics to be genuine, show that the facts of the Gospel were believed and preached in Asia and Europe. Had Christianity grown in mythical soil it would long since have withered beneath the scorching sun of criticism. But the fact remains that Paul's life was changed. He says that Jesus did it. His testimony is confirmed by a great company of men and women, from the first century to the twentieth, who have believed in Jesus, who have followed Him, who have suffered for Him, and who have declared, and do declare, that Jesus

is the resting place of love, the satisfaction of the soul. Their testimony must have weight in the estimation of the fact of Christ. Jesus must be seen in the light of Christian experience, as well as in the light of history; in the light of His influence upon the world, as well as in His spotless life. In Christian experience all mankind become one, though separated by centuries, by national, racial, and doctrinal differences. St. Bernard was a Roman Catholic; but it was he who wrote—

"Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men."

Toplady was a Calvinist; but he found in Jesus a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, and he sang—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

It was an Arminian, Charles Wesley, to whom Jesus was an enthusiasm and a passion, who set experience to music in that grand old hymn:

"Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

It was a Scottish Presbyterian, physically blind, but with the vision of the soul made clear by faith, who sang, out of the depths of a troubled heart:

"O Love, that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul on Thee."

It will not do to set aside Christian experience with a sneer. The Christ of experience is as real as the Christ of history. He is still light, peace, power, protection to the trusting soul. Men write infallibility across every utterance of science; but they grow shy of the testimony of the Christian, even though that testimony is sealed by a transformed life. We accept, and rightly accept, Huxley and Darwin as authorities in science, and not Henry Ward Beecher and Joseph Parker. Is it not also reasonable that in matters religious we should listen to those who have developed the moral and religious life, and who can, therefore, speak with authority, rather than to men who have dulled the finer religious faculties by spending all their days in "classifying worms and beetles?" "Whom say ye that I am?" History answers, and experience catches up the answer and sends it down the ages, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God"—Divine in His morals—Divine in His ministry.

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There is but one verdict as to the character of Jesus. He is the highest, the holiest manhood.

Usual is it to cite the opinions of atheist, agnostic, Unitarian, but Christ needs no certificate of character from any school or cult. He is supreme in His morals. He knows no human limitations, and defies all standards of comparison. The ethnologist cannot classify Him. The evolutionist cannot fit Him into a theory. The novelist—Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Marie Corelli, Hall Caine—cannot interpret Him. The philosopher cannot explain Him. They have tried it and have failed. Like towering Alps Christ flashes the light of God upon the darkness of the world. He is the one lonely, solitary figure upon perfection's heights.

It were easy to compare Christ with any saintly historical character and show His supremacy, but His "supremacy is not comparative. It is absolute." There is none that can approach Him. Those who have attained unto a measure of goodness have done so only by struggling upward through temptation, penitence and sin. But Christ was stainless, sinless, separate, and undefiled. His enemies never dared bring a moral charge against Him. The worst they could say was, "This man receiveth sinners." But they were smitten into

silence before the holy challenge: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Unpopularity sours many a nature. Defeat embitters many a life. Keats with his broken health became gloomy and morose. Byron's life savored of the bitterness of wormwood. Heine, the wit, the genius, became a cynic in misfortune. Goethe confessed that long since he had ceased to weep for the sorrows of others. How joyless was the youth of Schiller, the poet of revolt against the tyranny of his age. Voltaire and Rousseau met the social abuses of their day with a hatred that became the flame of the French Revolution. Life's fruit is oft bitter as the apples of Sodom. As some one has said: The weak give way to angry denunciations of the heartless ways of men. The proud brood over their wrongs and await the hour of revenge. The mean accept the situation and cynically sneer at the virtue of mankind. But the sweetness and the gentleness of the character of Jesus were never touched by the bitterness of life. He was cruelly wronged, insulted, and betrayed; but there was no malice in His thought, no bitterness in His speech, no weakness of complaint, no pride of revenge, no meanness of cynicism. There is not a trace of

selfishness in His character—no blot, no stain, no flaw, no failure, no mistake, but sweetness, purity, love, ideality—in a word, perfection.

How came this perfect flower to blossom upon earth? Does the age account for Him? Great men can be traced to the forces that produced them. The temper and the imagination of the people are ready, and genius finds its opportunity. Plato is the richest, ripest product of the Grecian age. Shakespeare is the flowering of the English Renaissance. Napoleon is the incarnation of eighteenth century forces that broke forth in the French Revolution. Huxley, Spencer, Browning, Tennyson are the children of their time. But what is there in the age to account for Jesus? Where is the ancestry capable of producing Him? It was an age corrupt and vile. Vice flourished under the sanction of religion in the pagan world. Rome was "ingeniously and exhaustively wicked," we are told. The Jew was intensely selfish, narrow and conservative. The whole world of theology and of politics was opposed to His thinking. But Jesus came with the purity of the lily, the breadth of view of the Son of Man, and with a spiritual conception of truth that has revolutionized the thinking of the world, and has poured itself into Christi-

anity as the sunshine into the flower. Was His character invented? Who, then, was the inventor? Matthew, the tax-gatherer? John, the fisherman of Galilee? Truly that were as great a miracle as the Christ Himself. "The inventor of such a being," says Rousseau, "would be a more astonishing character than the hero." "It is no use," says John Stuart Mill, "to say that the Christ of the Gospels is not historical, and that much of what is admired was added by His followers; for who among His disciples, or their proselytes, were capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus; or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels." Well hath it been said that an unlearned Galilean, or some unknown second century writer, could no more have originated the character of Jesus than could Peter have chiselled an Apollo, or Paul have painted a Sistine Madonna. The writers of the Gospels could never have "drawn from their imaginations the lines and colors, the lights and shades of the life of the Perfect Man." But they did it because they had a perfect "model," which they "faithfully copied." The age does not account for Jesus, son of Joseph, son of Mary; but the distance between Him and them can never be bridged by

heredity. He has the manner of another world. The stamp of Divinity is upon Him. Great are His claims; but His character supports them all—Son of Man, Son of God.

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Jesus is not only divine in His morals. He is divine in his ministry. He has exercised upon the world the influence of no mere man. "In the three short years of His ministry," says Lecky, "He has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and all the exhortations of moralists." If Jesus is but human then His claim to be divine is unspeakably false. And we are confronted by the strangest fact, that from the first century to the twentieth —from Ebionitism to Unitarianism—the truth that Jesus is a great and good man, but merely a man, has never been able to hold its own against the falsehood that Jesus is divine. Is it possible that for nineteen centuries error has thus triumphed over truth? Is it possible that the Church founded upon a falsehood has greater inspiration, vitality, diffusive power than the Church built upon the truth? It is not possible. The lower conception of the person of Christ is not truth. The higher conception of His divinity is not falsehood.

"Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus is the divine minister of the ages, and not of three brief years. He is the Christ of experience, entering into fellowship with man, and touching the soul to finer issues.

It was a proud boast of Michael Angelo that his work was so unlike that of any other artist that no lover of the beautiful could possibly mistake it. Exiled from Florence, Angelo found himself in Bologna, friendless and alone, and applied to a sculptor for work.

"What can you do?" asked the artist.

Silently Angelo took a crayon and sketched a human hand upon the wall, and "marvellous were the lines."

Rubinstein travelling in Russia was asked for his passport. But the passport had been lost. In vain the great pianist pleaded his profession and his name. Suddenly a happy thought came to one of the officials.

"Play something!" he exclaimed.

Rubinstein sat down to a half-worn-out organ and convinced the incredulous by revealing the touch and the soul of a master.

"I am Gustave Doré," said the great

French artist under similar circumstances in Switzerland. Sceptically the officials smiled. But Doré checked their suspicions by sketching in his rapid, splendid manner the peasants who were standing near.

Artists they—Angelo, Rubinstein, Doré—and they proved their claim. A Saviour Christ, and He, too, proves His claim. Marvellous are His works. There are none like them. He changes character, transforms life, sweetens the feelings, elevates the thoughts, purifies the affections, clarifies the vision, widens the moral and spiritual horizon, changes selfishness into self-sacrifice, and fills life with noble purpose. "What the sun is to that flower," said Tennyson, "Christ is to my soul." "The greatest discovery of my life," said Lord Kelvin, "is Christ as Saviour." "I have seen too many conversions," said Henry Drummond, "ever to doubt their reality." Gladstone adds his testimony. So does Scott, Faraday, Browning, and a host of intellectual giants, who cannot be accused of being misled by blind feeling. In the mild, pure, splendor of his teaching Christ gives voice to the inward needs and aspirations of our poor nature. He appeals to the contrite heart rather than to the speculative understanding. He

brings man back to God, gives him power over evil, develops the finest qualities of life, and leads him at his grandest to the grave.

Ofttimes we are referred to the morality of some unbeliever as an evidence that men may live good lives apart from Christianity. Folly were it to deny that goodness may exist apart from the historic Christ. Light was before the sun. Paganism had its starlight. The heathen world had Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, and Epictetus. Beautiful star-points upon the vast night of heathen darkness. It was the light of God, the reflection of the coming Sun of Righteousness, ushering in the larger day of Christianity. Jesus is the Source and the Origin of Truth. He touches the conscience, the intelligence, the ethics, the jurisprudence, the literature, the art, the life, of the age. He generates within the soul those moods, and within the mind those conceptions, that are shaping our civilization. It proves nothing, therefore, to point to agnostics whose lives are morally correct as an evidence that men may live good lives apart from Christianity. They are what they are, not because of their agnosticism, but, as some one has said, in spite of it. Their finer qualities are due to the

Christianity they reject. Huxley was nourished at the fount of Christianity. John Morley cannot open the pages of Milton, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Browning, Tennyson, without breathing a literary atmosphere that is saturated with Christian thought and feeling. Frances Power Cobbe was indebted to evangelical teaching. George Eliot abandoned her faith in God and immortality, but her favorite companion was "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis. Sceptical thinkers whose difficulties are intellectual, not moral, are not examples of non-Christian morality. They are environed by Christianity, and environment tells. Jesus to the world is sun, and sap, and life, and love, and power.

Christ's method of ministry, too, how wonderfully unique. Man would educate, but Christ regenerates. Man attacks the intellect, but Christ attacks the heart. Education alone has never succeeded in lifting man above the flesh. Athens, "the mother of arts and eloquence," the patron of poetry, the founder of systems of philosophy, could not save the world, nay, could not save herself, from degradation. Philosophy can never take the place of religion. "The one wishes to enlighten by making better;

the other to make better by enlightening. It is the difference between Socrates and Jesus."

How great is that difference. Christianity has produced no greater thinker than Plato. It has not excelled the genius of the Roman world for law. But it has poured a wealth of love into human life that Plato never knew; and justice has become a higher and a holier principle, baptized by the spirit of the Christian age. Jesus has fused the colder intellect with the warmth of the loving heart, and has given to the world a finer type of manhood and of womanhood—the Howards, the Havergals, the Garrisons, the Gordons, the Geddies and the Patons. Such characters never flourished upon heathen soil. They flourish only in the light of the divine ideal. They find their inspiration in Him who at Cæsarea Philippi drew forth the faith of His disciples, identified His Kingdom with His Church, and founded it upon His death and resurrection. He must go up to Jerusalem. He must suffer many things. He must be crucified and raised again the third day. There was a necessity for it. It was the necessity of love. As the dawn is the going forth of the morning, and the sunshine is the going forth of the sun, so the love

of Christ is the going forth of the heart of God. Love knows no sacrifice too great for an erring child. And "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." That is the meaning of Gethsemane, Pilate's Judgment Hall, the Cross and the empty grave. He must suffer if He would put away sin. He must be "wounded for transgressions" if He would become the Saviour of the world. The shadow of the Cross was ever with Him. The crimson thread of redemption runs through the whole of His ministry. Receiving the message of the Greeks His soul was troubled. The nails were already piercing His hands. The spear was already entering His heart. The cup of suffering was already lifted to his lips. The cry of a lost world awakened His compassion, and He gave Himself a ransom for many.

I stood by the bedside of a dying father. I saw the wistful look, the pain, as of a burdened soul.

"You are not afraid," I ventured.

"No;" he replied.

Then the voice trembled, and a tear stole down the cheek. "I would not care," he slowly added, "if it were not for my family."

He could meet death bravely as a man. But to meet death as a husband and a father,

to leave the widow and the fatherless to a cold unsympathetic world filled his soul with anguish. The sorrows of his loved ones were laid upon his heart. He suffered as a father.

Thus Christ came unto His death, not as Man, but as the Son of Man. The tears, the sorrows of the world were His. He bore the burden as a whole. It was not an angry God inflicting punishment upon His Son. Oh, no, it was not that. It was God in Christ Jesus suffering for the sins of man. The sorrows of the world were gathered up into His heart. The loneliness of Hagar, the bereavement of Jacob, the suffering of Job, the tears of David, the burdens of Israel, were there. His were the darkness of the night, the trials of the desert, the stress of the storm, the agonies of humanity. In some nameless way the guilt of the whole world was laid upon His soul. Love bore the burden without a murmur and breathed upon the Cross the divinest prayer ever uttered; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "Forgive *them*." Forgive whom? Forgive Pilate who condemned the innocent? Yes, forgive Pilate. Forgive Judas who betrayed Him? Yes, forgive Judas. Forgive the Jews who rejected Him, and clamored for His blood? Yes, for-

give the Jews. Forgive the mob who derided and insulted Him and the soldiers who nailed Him to the tree! Yes, forgive "unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." Whatever may be the theory of the Atonement, in Him is the revelation of the love of God, the love that forgives the penitent and crowns life with victory over sin and death. Jesus shall yet see the triumph of His ministry. He shall yet see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, for beyond death and the grave is the sunlight of Resurrection and of God.

Matthew Arnold was sitting one evening at a window overlooking Dover Beach. The tide was at its full. As he listened to the slow, tremulous cadences of the moonlit waves washing the pebbles upon the shining sand, his sceptical fancy saw therein the rise and ebb of the tide of Christianity.

"The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled,
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world."

The vision of the blind prophet! Not the sea of faith, but the sea of scepticism, unbelief and

sin shall retreat into outer darkness. The love of the Son of God shall conquer. Behold Him! Come and see Him! Come and see Him! No man ever looked into the perfect life of the ministering Christ without feeling His wondrous power. No man ought to contemplate the sweetness, patience, gentleness, purity, love and truth of Jesus without becoming a better man. In the sunlight of His presence the heart grows tender, the will surrenders, and the soul is touched to finer issues. Wouldst thou receive the blessings of His ministrations, then tarry with the ministering Christ.

A potter found a lump of clay—so runs the legend—that was as fragrant as the rose.

"What makes you so fragrant when other things of clay are odorless?" questioned the potter.

"I lay at the foot of a fragrant rose and its sweetness became mine," was the pretty reply.

Life is written all over with the fruits of companionship. Dwelling with the evil we become evil, with the good we become good. Dwelling with Jesus we receive the beauty of His character and the fragrance of His life. Newton dwelt among the stars and became the prince of astronomers. Demosthenes dwelt

with ideal eloquence and became the peerless orator. Kant dwelt with great thoughts and became a philosopher. Mozart dwelt with the harmony of sound and became a musician. But he who dwells apart with Jesus will become a prophet to a sinful world. He will share in the work of the ministering Christ. And seeing the dawning of the day, and the sunlight breaking upon the hill-tops, he will point the lonely, the wearied, the discouraged, struggling with temptation, trial, sin, to the loving Son of Man, the All-Sufficient Saviour, divine in His morals and His ministry. "Whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God."

CHAPTER III.

THE TRUTH OF LIFE

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"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—JOHN 8. 32.

JESUS lived in a world that knew not truth. He saw man in bondage to error, minds fettered by superstition, souls enslaved by sin. The world had become a great prison-house. Freedom had departed. There was none to deliver.

The Jew sought political freedom—freedom by force. We sympathize with the use of force in the defence of fatherland and home. How the pulse used to beat when, in schoolboy days, we read of Leonidas and his Spartans; of the Greeks at Marathon; of the struggles of Wallace and of Bruce; of Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot; of Washington, whose cause was just; of the heroes of Queenston's Heights, Chrysler's Farm, and Lundy's Lane. The fire of patriotism burns upon the altar of the heart, leaps through the veins, and tempts the very

sword. But the kingdoms of the world founded upon force—Alexander's, Cæsar's, Charlemagne's, Napoleon's—have perished. Christ's Kingdom, founded upon truth, abides forever.

The Greek sought mental freedom—the freedom of philosophy. We rejoice in the freedom of mind. Intellect is greater than force. Knowledge is power. Ignorance pitted against intelligence is weakness against strength. But education must stand for noblest ideals, justice, righteousness, truth, faith, hope, charity, as well as for intelligence. Intellect alone has never been able to stay sin's devastating progress. Intellect without character may become a power for evil. Mathematics may become roguery; literature may become lust. Greece ran full circle in poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, oratory, the drama and philosophy. What culture is represented by the names of Homer, Hesiod, Alcaeus, Sappho, Phidias, Zeuxis, Sophocles, Euripides, Demosthenes, Socrates and Plato! But intellect could not lift Greece above the degrading passions of the flesh. How oft has genius grovelled in the mire. How brilliant the intellect of Napoleon. But how monstrously selfish the man. The truth of intellect alone cannot bring freedom to the soul, Jesus knew it, and He came pro-

claiming the larger truth of life. "Ye shall know the truth" of God, of man, of harmony, of loving service; "and the truth shall make you free."

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The world knew not God when Jesus came. Paganism had not known Him. Judaism had forgotten Him. Religion, the strength and solace of the bruised and aching heart, was but a name. Under its sanction in the pagan world flourished vice unspeakable. The gods were gods of bestial passion. Bacchus was the god of wine. Venus was a goddess vile. Lewdness reigned in temple and in sacred grove. Religion, divorced from morality, had lost its hold upon the popular mind. The shadow of despair had settled upon the world.

The Jew had a clearer conception of the truth. "We have one father, even God," was his proud boast. But spirituality had departed from his worship. Holiness had faded from his life. God was nationalized, shut up within the temple, wrapped in the grave clothes of empty formality; but Christ rent the bands of formalism, brought man back to God, gathered up into Himself all the broken lights of the past, foregleams of the rising sun, and flashed His brightness to the hill-tops and the

valleys of human life, scattering the night and ushering in the boundless day of the truth of the Fatherhood of God.

In a beautiful dream story Jean Paul Richter tells of a philosopher, who having been discussing the existence of God, fell asleep in his study. In his dream he stood in a graveyard. The earth trembled with the violence of an earthquake. Avalanches tumbled around him. The dead came forth, and as they gathered around the ruined church a form bearing the expression of a never-dying sorrow sank down upon the altar.

"O Christ, is there no God?" the spirits of the dead exclaim.

"There is none," He answers.

He tells them that He has traversed the universe. He has gone from star to star, from planet to planet, past suns and worlds and systems. He has looked into the depths of the measureless abyss, and cried:

"Father, where art Thou?"

But no voice replied, save the voice of the eternal storm. The dead draw nearer and sorrowfully exclaim:

"O Christ, have we no Father?"

The Christ answers: "We have no Father. We are all orphans."

That is the teaching of Atheism; but it is not the teaching of the Christ. A new day dawned upon the world when Christ deepened the Old Testament conception of God, and revealed the truth of our Father, sorrowing over the prodigal, rejoicing over his return, tenderly solicitous for the welfare of His children. "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." To faith long tried God may seem like an unjust judge or like a selfish neighbor. Jesus declares that He is neither the one nor the other, but a loving Father listening to the plaint of His children. In the darkness of the night we may hear His voice. In the press of temptation we may feel His power. When the way is rough and rugged we may clasp His loving hand. In the aloneness of life—alone, though in the crowd—we may realize the meaning of the poet's words:

> "Then was I as a child that cries,
> And crying knows his father near."

Professor Sedgwick, himself no Christian, but a free-thinker, tells us that he could never read without tears those lines from Tennyson's "In Memoriam." "I find in them," he adds, the indestructible and inalienable minimum of

faith, which humanity cannot give up, because it is necessary for life." To surrender faith is to surrender life. We cannot escape from God, for we cannot escape from ourselves. Divinity within cries unto Divinity without. The deep of human need calls unto the deep of Divine satisfaction. Shall He who formed the ear not hear? Shall He who made the eye not see? Shall He who planted divine aspirations within the soul not satisfy the same? The prayer-cry is universal. Universality is the pledge of truth. We are not orphans. We have one Father, even God. He is around us and within us. He loves us even in our sins. He follows us even in our wanderings. "He knoweth them that trust in Him." How pathetic the story of Carlyle, standing at the grave of his wife, whom he might have made more happy, and murmuring through his tears: "If I had known!" How sharp the grief, how bitter the remembrance of some wrong done to the loved dead; and we say: "Oh, if I had only known!" In our ignorance we go blundering through life. But Jesus tells us that our Father knoweth all about us. He knows the stress of the storm, the darkness of the night, the strength of temptation, the keenness of sorrow, the soreness of trial, the struggle, the peni-

tence, the tears. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father give good things to them that ask him." Infinitely precious is the truth of the loving heart of God that Jesus has revealed to man.

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Jesus not only revealed God—He revealed man. The world knew not the meaning of moral evil when Jesus came. He shed the light of truth upon the darkness of sin. He analyzed it into selfishness. He traced it to the inner life of man. He taught that sin reaches beyond conduct to character, beyond action to the secret springs of thought. Out of the heart of man cometh defilement. But Christ came to purify the fountain of the heart, and to cleanse the soul from sin's polluting stain.

Truly man is a mystery, bearing the stamp of divinity and the stamp of the world. What magnificent powers are his, yet what failures and mistakes. What wonders of achievement in science, literature and art, yet what low aims and what earthly desires. There are depths in his nature into which he is afraid to look. There are heights of aspiration to which he

often lifts his longing eyes. In the words of another, there are flashes of truth that light up the nobility of his character, and clouds of night that cloak the dark purpose and the evil thought. Truly man is a mystery with his feet of clay, and his head "crowned with celestial fire and touching other worlds."

History abounds in illustrations. What genius was Shelley's! He seemed like a being from another world, soaring above the clouds; yet unbridled passion chained him to the earth. What force and vigor in Byronic verse; but what bitterness of life, what vulgarity of thought and feeling. What strength of intellect in Coleridge, "the Metaphysician, the Logician and the Bard"; but Coleridge was the helpless slave of opium. How generous the nature of Voltaire; but how vain, how voluptuous, how shallow the man. What ugly thoughts could lurk within the soul of Heine, the poet of the beautiful, the sentimental dreamer. Vice warred with culture and penitence with sin in the soul of Paul Verlaine. "He left thirteen volumes of poetry, which added to the fame of France, but he died an unspeakable outcast." Oft skyward, like the eagle, the soul would soar, but sin clips the wings of aspiration and man grovels like the

worm. The heir of immortality too oft becomes the victim of his own transgression.

In that gruesome story of Victor Frankenstein Mrs. Shelley tells of a young student of natural science, who discovered the secret of biology. Having constructed a human frame of odds and ends from a neighboring charnel house he communicated life to the same. This dreadful creature, loathsome in appearance, follows his creator. He cannot shake him off. He continually dogs his foot-steps, tyrannizes over him, and finally leads him to a tragic end.

It is an illustration in fiction of the awful truth that the creation of sinful thought and imagination may become a fact in action, and overthrow its own creator. Scripture proclaims it thunder-toned: "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." One cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. The fragrance of the honeysuckle comes not from vulgar tansy. Like begets like in the spiritual as well as in the natural world. In the teaching of Jesus "that which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit." But His was the message of supreme confidence of the triumph of Spirit. Amid the awful possibilities of evil He saw infinite possibilities of good.

It was among the odds and ends of an old second-hand book-store, and in the midst of the sordid, money-making Cohens, that Daniel Deronda discovered the prophet Mordecai. The soul of the prophet touching the soul of Deronda, as only soul can, gave unity to his feelings and aspirations, and aim and direction to his life. What is George Eliot's meaning? It is the artist's way of enforcing the truth that beneath the sordidness and selfishness, the follies and the fashions of life, there are hidden spiritual forces that meet us in the most unexpected ways, awakening a newer sense of life's responsibilities, quickening spiritual aspiration and desire, and giving life the strength of noble purpose. There are spiritual forces in every life that if allowed free play would lift us up to God. There are infinite needs that cry out for Infinite satisfaction. To suppress life's spiritual forces is to suppress life itself. To prevent the satisfaction of life's needs is to invite spiritual death. Yet how oft man's action translated into speech would say: "What have I to do with God? What have I to do with religion? What have I to do with prayer? These things may be good enough for women and children and feeble men, but what have I, of the stalwart frame

and with the will and power to wrestle with life's prize, to do with them?" O foolish one, and slow of heart to understand life's meaning! In warring against God man is warring against himself. In despising religion he is despising the best part of his own equipment. In silencing the voice of prayer he is silencing the cry of his own soul. As unnatural for a mother to strangle her new-born babe, and silence the infant's cry for a parent's care, as for man to strangle the religious convictions of his nature and to silence the cry of his heart after God. But that is what sin does. It aims a blow at the inner life of man. Sin is moral suicide. Sin is vandalism. We have read of the Goths who attacked Rome, plundering the temples, destroying works of rarest art, and lighting their fires with beautiful paintings. Vandals were they. And sin is vandalism, robbing the body of its richest treasures, and destroying the image of God within the temple of the soul. Sin defiles nature, pollutes thought, perverts will, blots out spiritual vision, and robs man of his splendid heritage in God. But Christ came to put away sin; to teach man that the higher should predominate over the lower; that his thoughts should dwell upon the sweet, the pure, the good, the true, the eternal; that he should

hate vice and love virtue; trample the sins of life beneath his feet; and exercise the power of self-control over the evil passions of the heart. Jesus revealed the supreme worth of manhood. Life is more than meat, more than raiment, more than all the accumulated treasures of the world. Jesus set life's standard; and He set it high. It is not wealth, but character; not the appetites and vanities of life, but personal righteousness; not selfishness, but self-sacrifice, and loving service. Jesus alone has revealed the truth of what man is and of what he may become.

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It is not truth in the abstract, but truth made vital in the life that counts. To know something of Divine holiness, and something of human sinfulness may be "an isosceles deficient in the base." The triangle of truth is completed by the harmony of spirit between man and God. The engine must be coupled with the train for power. The lens must be focussed on the star for vision. Thought must wed expression for poetry. Sound must harmonize with sound for music. The finite must touch the infinite; the spirit of man must harmonize with the Spirit of God through faith, love, and obedience ere we can have the music, the poetry,

the vision and the power that come through knowledge of the truth.

Is that blind mysticism? "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." "How can these things be?" Jesus replies with the figure of the wind blowing where it listeth. There can be no communication in wireless telegraphy until harmony is established between the dull carbon, copper, brass of receiver and transmitter. Is it a marvellous thing, therefore, that there must be harmony of will, harmony of thought, harmony of affection, harmony of aspiration, harmony of spirit between man and God? I do not understand the mystery of the New Birth. Regeneration is God's work, not ours. Ours is to turn away from sin and face in the direction of righteousness. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts." Let him trust the love and obey the will of the Son of Man, who has given Himself as a sacrifice for sin, and he shall find the truth of life. We are saved not by a theory, but by a person. A little child may grasp this truth where the philosopher may fail.

I remember a sweet-faced child who came to me to join the church.

"How old are you?" I asked.

"I am ten."

"Why do you wish to join the Church?"

"Because I love Jesus."

"Who is Jesus?"

"He is the Son of God."

"Why did He come to earth?"

"To die for the sins of the world."

"Will He receive and forgive all who come to Him?"

"He will receive all."

"Has He received you?"

With a smile so sweet that it illustrated the wisdom of Jesus in setting a little child in the midst of His disciples, she replied:

"He has said He will receive me."

We are saved not by a theory, but by a person. "Except ye be converted and become as little children" ye cannot find the truth of life. With the faith of childhood go forth to do the will of the Master, and He will abide in blessed union with the soul forever.

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To know the truth of harmony with Christ is to know the truth of Christian service. It cannot be otherwise. Life is its own revelator. It pours itself through flower and forest until the valleys and the hills rejoice. It beats and blushes in the flesh of youth, and throbs in

every motion. And the life in harmony with God will manifest itself in flower and fruit and wealth of Christian service. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" to serve not self, but Jesus. Self means slavery. Service means freedom. Self is leaden footed, blind eyed. Christian service gives wings and vision. Self narrows, dwarfs, materializes, imprisons. Christly ministrations widen the moral horizon, and bring out the imprisoned splendor of the soul. To save life is to enslave it. To lose it in the service of the Master is to find the freedom of the truth.

Look back over the past and note the men whom the historian delights to honor. They are not those who did nothing but create wealth, who lived in luxury and selfishness. They are the men who sacrificed themselves for others, who went forth like valiant knights to war with evil and to make the world a little better than they found it. True greatness is measured by service, says Jesus. His testimony is verified in history; for the future oft reverses the judgments of the past. We honor to-day, not guilty Herod, but the Baptist; not the luxurious dukes of Florence, but Savonarola; not Francis Todd, the slave-holder, who imprisoned William Lloyd Garrison, but the great emancipator. The judg-

ments of history verify the words of the Master, that he who will be greatest shall be servant of all.

In all ages the freedom of the truth has led to loving ministrations. John Howard pours out his life in prison reform. Dr. Barnardo gives himself to the ministry of homeless orphans. Lady Somerset turns from the pleasures and the follies of the world of fashion to minister to others. General Booth spends heart and brain and nerve and blood in the service of "the submerged tenth." Quintin Hogg from a home of luxury and wealth goes forth to minister to boot-blacks, wearing their garb, carrying their outfit, and teaching them the Bible by the light of a tallow candle under dark London arches. He put half a million dollars and his life-blood into the Polytechnic Institute, where hundreds have been trained in the making of manhood. Time would fail me to tell of others, missionaries, philanthropists, reformers, children of service who have gone forth to undo heavy burdens and to let the oppressed go free, feeding, clothing, sheltering the homeless and the outcast, following the example of the Master who went about doing good.

Say not: "Such opportunities come not to

me." The soul rejoicing in the truth will find them everywhere, in the home, in the office, on the street, and in the world's great mart. Along the highway of life with its dust and heat we may still meet the doubting Thomas, the erring Peter, the anxious Nicodemus, the sceptical Nathanael, the troubled Jairus, the broken-hearted Magdalene, the joyless Samaritan at the well of earthly pleasure. The poor, the friendless, the suffering, the sorrowing, the tempted are ever with us. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Herein is freedom—the freedom of the soul that has found the truth of God, of man, of harmony and of loving service.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF LIFE

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"Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?"—ISAIAH 10. 15.

The power of Assyria, world-wide in its aspirations, swift and cruel as its gods, was harrying the nations as an urchin plunders the nest of a helpless bird. In the suggestive language of the prophet, "there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped." Israel had been overrun. Judah was threatened with extinction. Some were clinging for protection to an alliance with Assyria's king. Others knew it was a broken reed. But God was silent. The enemy was near. Jerusalem was afraid.

Against this background of shallow policy, unbelief and fear stands Isaiah. In the sublimity of his faith he rises above the narrow, provincial conception of God, and sees Him upon the throne of the universe, overruling the nations of the world in the accomplishment of

His purposes. The king of Assyria may have the triumph of a day, but righteousness must triumph in the end. Might shall not always triumph over right. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" Is the material greater than the spiritual? Is the environment greater than the man? Are the forces of nature and the selfish diplomacy of nations greater than the God of the universe? The axe is the instrument of the woodman. The saw is the tool of the carpenter. The forces of the world are the agents of "the Master of all good workmen." Force is not ultimate. Intellect is greater than force. The laborer may fell the tree, hew the timber, saw the board, and quarry the stone; but it is the thought in the brain of the architect that produces the cathedral.

I used to stand on Princeton campus watching the sculptors at work upon the rough stone set in the frieze of Alexander Hall. It looked like a mechanical performance; but ideas were taking shape in forms beautiful and graceful, industry, education, science, art, literature, religion. The difference between a mechanical performance and a work of art is an idea. It thrills and throbs in the brain of the artist,

until from marble block a form appears that seems to grow warm with life, and its marble drapery seems like the soft yielding folds of silk. When intellect is touched by love it becomes a greater power still. Love is greater than knowledge and power. It informs the one and controls the other. It lays the foundation of the home, organizes Christian charities, founds hospitals and asylums, and gathers the children of misfortune and neglect in its arms, and carries them in its bosom. The spiritual is greater than the material. And when the world comes to us, like the Assyrian of old, with its coarse and arrogant demands for tribute, shall we pay it, or shall we not? Shall we weakly compromise, or oppose it in the spirit of righteousness? Shall the axe govern the woodman, or the woodman the axe? Shall the saw control the carpenter or the carpenter the saw? Force or faith? The material or the spiritual? The world or God? Which shall it be?

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Pertinent are these questions to-day, both nationally and individually. We are standing upon the threshold of great national development. Canada, the youngest of the nations, has stepped into the national arena, and is com-

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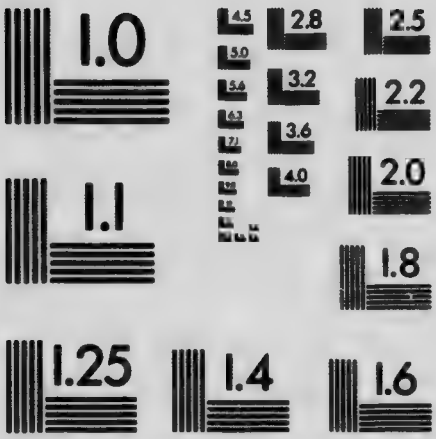

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pelling recognition of her possibilities and worth. With pardonable pride we recognize the fact—and others recognize it, too—that we have the material elements of greatness in coal, and steel, and agriculture. There is boundless wealth locked up in the great wide West, in the Klondyke of the North, in our forests, mines and seas. The tide of emigration is setting towards our shores. The great prairies are inviting millions, and many are coming from East and West and South. Canada is rising in the strength of her new-found energy and freedom, and facing in the direction of national greatness. But with the development of our national resources, there should be a quickening of the national conscience, a deepening of the sense of national responsibility in the moral and religious elevation of the race. Not by material wealth alone; but by great ideas can a nation live. The test of national greatness is not found in the reports of banks, railroads, manufacturers, commerce—grand and desirable as these may be—but in the moral and spiritual capital of the people. Righteousness is the salt of national life, and gives permanency to national institutions. Materialism alone will not do. Prosperity is the gift of God; and He holds nations, as well as individuals, respon-

sible. But with the exuberance of national youth, with the consciousness of growing strength, tasting the joys of the material, basking in the sunshine of prosperity, there is the danger of allowing ourselves to sink down upon the lower levels of life, where place and power and wealth count for more than character, where man is estimated not by what he is, but by what he has, where pliability oft takes precedence of principle, and where the vicious thought enters into the ethics of commercial and political life that a man cannot always be honest and succeed, forgetting that the man who is true to conscience and to duty, and maintains his spiritual integrity is successful even though he gain no material rewards.

This is the Assyrian of the modern world. A soulless, selfish materialism, demanding tribute of individuals and of nations. We are troubled to-day not by an intellectual, but by a practical atheism—an atheism that acknowledges God in theory, but denies Him in life; that pays tribute to the world, adopts its maxims, follows its ways, cultivates its temper, uses its weapons and lives its creed. Before the coarse laugh of the world the Golden Rule seems feeble. "Elections are not won by prayers," says one. "No great business was

ever built upon the Beatitudes," says another. "Business is the survival of the fittest," says a third. Selfishness abounds. Significant is it that a recent graduating class of a great University selected as its ideal historical character not one of the long line of heroes who have lifted the world nearer the ideal good, but Napoleon Buonaparte, whom history recognizes as selfishness incarnate. The spirit of materialism is abroad. It has eaten its way into the heart of commerce and of corporations. Men are oft rated lower than dividends, and the millions than the millionaires. The dream of something for nothing becomes unhealthy speculation, fascinating the young, the old, the rich, the poor; and in the end the short and easy road to wealth becomes a way of thorns.

Balzac enforces this truth in the character of Eugene Rastignac in "Pére Goriot." Eugene is a law student in Paris, well-connected, clever, high-spirited and ambitious. Introduced to Parisian society by his aunt, a Viscountess, he is dazzled by its brilliancy, servants in livery, elegant surroundings, impassioned faces, graceful forms, everywhere the charm of poetry, luxury, art. Intoxicated with delight he becomes impatient of the slow drudgery of law. Money—he must have money! "Luxury

gnawed at his heart, greed burned in his veins, his throat was parched with the thirst for gold."

In this frame of mind he met his evil genius, Vautrin, the ex-convict, the man of iron, the cynic, the scoffer at virtue. With the subtlety of Mephistopheles he appeals to Eugene's poverty, vanity, cleverness, ambition, and to the uncertainty of patient drudgery, and suggests a way to wealth by the commission of a crime—a quarrel, a duel, a lunge, and his victim is "turned off into the dark."

"How frightful!" exclaims Eugene. "You do not really mean it? You are joking."

But the tempter meets his virtuous scruples with contempt and scorn. Principles are only events. Honesty is weakness. There are no laws but those of expediency. He shakes Eugene's faith in the morality and justice of society. The rich under the guise of law steal millions, and are flattered by society. The poor man steals a bank-note, and is sent to prison. In the mad race for wealth and pleasure man tramples his fellow-man under foot, breaks hearts, and ruins homes. Eugene himself, if he is to cleave his way to social success, will be guilty of similar crimes, and in the end, though he shed no blood, will be as great

a murderer as the man who goes forth with stiletto in the dark. He argues revolt against society, the code of the Anarchist. "The only true success," says this cool, calculating villain, "is the crime never found out because properly executed."

"Silence, sir!" Eugene exclaims. "I will not hear any more. You make me doubt myself. My sentiments at this moment are my only science."

But the poison has entered his soul. He has allowed the tempter a place in thought; and the citadel of his sentiments will soon be stormed. Despite his good resolutions he faces in the wrong direction. He dines, and wines, and gambles, and lives in a world of gaiety. Misery, remorse, and debts accumulate. His evil genius is ever at his side, the tempter "with rainbow wings . . . that dazzle fools." He dallies with temptation. Feebler grows resistance, and in the end he yields.

Then comes disillusionment. He sees the hypocrisy and unreality of it all. But his character has suffered damage. The ideals of his youth have departed never to return. Virtue has become cynicism; and the sweetness of truth has been turned into gall. In the spirit of the Anarchist he turns upon society with the

defiant threat: "Henceforth there is war between us."

In this parable of life we have a fitting illustration of that inordinate desire for worldly success that is too characteristic of the present day. The age is smitten with a lust for pleasure, and a greed for gold. There is an impatient scorn of the slow gains of honest toil, and an eager, feverish desire for a short and easy way to wealth. At every turn stands the tempter, blunting conscientious scruples, shattering ideals, weakening moral power of resistance until character is sacrificed to ignoble aims. Then perchance disillusionment. The shallowness, the vanity of it all! But too oft, alas! character is shattered in the struggle. Cynicism laughs at virtue, gibes at truth. Then is life filled with Byronic bitterness and Byronic failure.

Suggestive is the confession of a certain millionaire that every man's hand was against him, that he did not remember a solitary individual that had ever done him a favor. "I am not surprised," he frankly admits, "for I have had to shove down every man I ever met, I have made my own fortune, but in doing so I have ruined thousands." He had found the secret of making money and manipulating

stocks on Wall Street, but he had lost that which money cannot buy, the secret of friendship and of love. The refining joys of life in science, art, literature, religion, God, were sacrificed for gold. What had he in return? His millions and the grim satisfaction of having ruined thousands, and of being friendless and alone. Yet such men are frequently exalted as the models of youth. We are told of their ascent from the bottom of the ladder to the top; but we are not always told the manner of their climbing. We rightly admire enterprise, thrift, courage, the will to do and the will to dare; but we ought to admire principles and ideals more.

"O if we draw a circle p
Heedless of far gain,
Greedy of quick returns, sure,
Bad is the bargain."

To sacrifice the gains of character for the "quick returns" of the material present is a bargain ruinous. The voice of God, of duty, of conscience, and of the soul that Christ has purchased with His blood, cries out against it.

Maupassant, a French novelist, tells the story of the wife of a young government clerk, who was ambitious to shine in society, but

poverty clipped the wings of her ambition and life was made wretched by the thought. Invited to a government ball, her husband at great expense, and with great difficulty, provided a beautiful costume, and from a wealthy friend she borrowed what seemed to be a costly diamond necklace. Returning home from the ball, at which she had enjoyed a brilliant triumph, attracting even the attention of the prime minister, she removed her wraps and stood before the mirror to see herself once more in all her beauty. But alas! the necklace had been stolen. Thirty-six thousand francs were expended in the purchase of another, and the debt thus incurred was paid by ten years of pinching economy and of deepest humiliation. It was paid in the broken health of the young wife. She was prematurely old.

One day she met her wealthy friend in Paris, and touched by her care-worn expression, the latter exclaimed:

"My poor Mathilde! What has changed you so?"

"Ah," she replied, "I have had a hard life. Do you remember the necklace you lent me once?"

"Yes."

"Well, I lost it."

"*Lost it?* What do you mean? You sent it back to me."

"I sent back another just like it, for which we have been ten years paying."

Deeply touched, her friend took both her hands in hers.

"My poor Mathilde! My necklace was not diamond; it was only paste."

Oh, the irony of life! Paste *versus* diamond! And many choose the *paste*. For it they toil, and slave, and pay out the richest treasures of body and of soul, forgetting that character alone is imperishable diamond, because it alone reflects the light of the character of God. The workm. is greater than his ols. Man is greater than his environment. The spiritual is greater than the material. Life is not great until the soul finds the inspiration of the prophet's faith and the prophet's God.

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Life is not material. Such was the faith of the old prophet. His vision swept beyond the national horizon. He saw God upon the throne of the universe, and read the spiritual interpretation of life. Life is spiritual. Man hath his origin in God. His destiny is eternal.

The gold that gleams in the sand of some

Klondyke stream had its origin far up and beyond the river in the heart of the Great North. The gold of faith, of truth, of love, gleaming in the sands of human life, has its origin far up and beyond the stream of humanity—in the very heart of God.

> **From life's minute beginnings up at last**
> **To man, the consummation of this scheme**
> **Of being, the completion of this sphere**
> **Of life."**

He has ever lived in the thought and feeling of all seekers after truth. He has ever been unfolding Himself in the religious life of man. The deep of man's nature calls unto the deep of the Infinite; and God's answer is the Incarnation. Jesus came reshaping the thinking of the world and exalting spiritual life. His teaching is ethical. It is more. If it were not more, it would not be so much. It is the motive power of love reinforcing His ethical teaching that is enriching life and is giving the world a finer type of manhood and of womanhood, men and women whose feet are firmly planted in the path of duty, whose brows are encircled with the halo of divine truth, whose good deeds, like the fruit of some noble tree, are scattered to the world, and whose influence can never be estimated until seen in the light of the great white throne.

Sunshine hath power; so hath love. Who can estimate the power that paints the violet, ripens the apple, gives fragrance to the hyacinth, and flavor to the peach? Infinitely greater is the love that changes selfishness into self-sacrifice, roughness into smoothness, bitterness into sweetness, and fills the heart of man with the gentleness of strength. Love hath its conquests everywhere. It transforms the drunkard and the thief. Witness Jerry MacAulay. It changes worldliness into philanthropy. Witness Charles N. Crittendon. It supplants selfishness by self-sacrifice. Witness Richard Fuller of the South—born of an aristocratic family, a graduate of Harvard, a lawyer of exceptional ability, with splendid prospects for a brilliant career in Congress and at the Bar. But he left all to preach the Gospel to a sinning world. His friends were dismayed at his decision and Senator Preston was sent to remonstrate.

"Fuller, what is this I hear?" began Preston. "Are you crazy? Do you mean to give up your splendid prospects in public life, to bury yourself in a pulpit? It is irrational and absurd."

Fuller listened quietly, and then replied:

"Preston, I was living a selfish life. I had

no thought of duty or of God. My one great aim was to win success, and to dazzle my friends with the brilliancy of my career. But my eyes were opened and I discovered God's great love. I saw that Christ had given Himself for me, and that it was most rational that I should love Him in return and put my life into His service."

The Senator changed the conversation, but when leaving he took Fuller by the hand, and said: "After all, I believe that your way is rational and that ours is absurd."

Is it irrational to love Christ? Is it irrational to serve God? Is it irrational to stand up on the side of conscience, duty, right? When a man's soul man knows it is not irrational. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that useth it? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that useth it?" Shall the material exalt itself above the spiritual? Surely that were irrational. Man is not the creature of a day, a week, a year. He is the child of eternity. He is

"The heir of hopes too fair to turn out false."

He who follows the leading of the light, who arises when the hand of duty is laid upon him, who obeys when the voice of duty calls, shall

come at length to his spiritual inheritance, and the grave shall be the way to immortality and God.

"Death came to the bedside of a good man," says Lavater. "Welcome, thrice welcome, messenger of immortality," said the Christian.

"Art thou not dismayed at seeing me," said Death.

"No," replied the servant of God.

"And wherefore dost thou not tremble?"

"I am a Christian," said the man, smiling, as he spoke.

"Then suddenly Death breathed upon him, and behold there was no longer any Death, or any mortal. A grave had opened under his feet, and something lay within. But suddenly heavenly voices drew my eyes up toward the clouds. There I beheld the Christian. He smiled upon me as he smiled upon Death and folded his hands. Bright spirits surrounded him and welcomed him to their company with shouts of joy. Then I looked into the grave and found out what it was that lay there. It was the Christian's worn-out garment."

Shall the axe boast? No. Shall the saw magnify? No. Shall the material triumph over the spiritual? No. The child of faith and duty is the heir of immortality. Life is spiritual. God reigns in love.

CHAPTER V.

THE IDEAL OF LIFE

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"Thou hast put all things under his feet."— Ps. 8. 6.

"But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus."— Heb. 2. 8, 9.

The psalmist is contemplating the vastness of the universe—the moonlit skies, the silvery stars. In contrast therewith man seems infinitely little. "What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him?"

Did the universe seem vast to the psalmist? Vaster far does it seem to the modern mind. Astronomy has become a science. The names of Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Kepler, and the Herschels have become household words. Great telescopes look out upon the heavens. Man plays with the solar spectrum, studies the chemistry of suns, the atmosphere of planets, the nature of comets and of nebulæ. A few thousand stars are visible to the naked eye.

The telescope shows millions. The photographic print takes up the tale, and tells of suns, and worlds, and glowing constellations. In contrast with the appalling vastness of the universe man does seem infinitely little. His importance is no longer supported by the thought that the world on which he lives is the centre of the universe. Astronomy shattered this refuge of his greatness; and the earth has become a tiny speck amid a myriad suns. Geology, ruthless as astronomy, has robbed him of the once popular belief that God created a brand new world in six brief days for his special benefit. Dethroned in space and time, evolution seemed to join in a grand conspiracy to complete the wreck of human greatness. Is it not written in the creed of materialism that man is no longer the uncrowned king of the universe, but a few pounds of animated dust? "What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man that thou visitest him?" has been asked in another spirit than that of the psalmist. That the God of the silent stars and of the great spaces should interfere in the petty affairs of human life is considered by many as worthy of inextinguishable laughter. And a brilliant English poet, voicing the scepticism of the age has sung:

"The stars that watch blind earth in the deep night swim
Laugh, saying, What God is your God that ye call on Him?
What is man that the God who is Guide of our way should care
If a day for a man be golden, his night be grim?"

. . . . . .

Something depends, however, upon our standard of measurement. Mere bigness does not constitute greatness. A diamond may be worth more than a mountain of earth. The little child that the mother holds in her arms, watching the play of soul in the changing expressions of the face, until the heart grows tender and the eyes grow moist with very gladness, is more precious than ten thousand worlds. There are some things in life that cannot be measured by tons and miles and cubic feet. A man's weight asks for scales. His height calls for a foot-rule. But personality knows no such measurement. It is a little limited to the area of the body in which finds its centre of influence as is the current of electricity limited to the area of the generating plant. "Man," says Pascal, "is the feeblest branch of nature, but he is a branch that thinks." Herein consists man's greatness. His thoughts traverse the universe. He sweeps the heavens into the

realm of imagination. He sets geometry to the skies, measures the distance of the stars, and follows the flight of the planets. He gathers sounds into symphonies, and colors into beautiful pictures. He chisels his thoughts and aspirations into marble, and pours forth his soul in prose and poem. With the stars that flashed in splendor from the breast of night the ancients oft identified their dead. But what star ever shone resplendant like the star of genius? Galileo with his telescope is greater than a world of Saturns. The brilliant intellect of Browning outshines the glories of Orion. No towering Alps crowned with the glory of the rising sun can compare with the soul of Coleridge, as awed by the grandeur of the scene his thoughts reached after the Infinite. Man's moral nature reveals his greatness as a ray of solar light reveals the composition of the sun. God hath set eternity in his heart. The infinitely little God hath made infinitely great. "Thou hast made him a little less than God." "Thou hast put all things under his feet." But with the writer of the Hebrews, "we see not yet all things put under Him, but we see Jesus."

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The actual is not yet ideal. The ideal is not yet actual. Man has come a long way and has

accomplished much. But he is not yet master of himself. He has not yet "put all things under him." With the freshness and the buoyancy of youth he starts out upon the journey. But clouds gather, cares press, responsibilities burden, and the thorns of life oft pierce and bleed. Temptations crowd upon him. There are pitfalls into which, alas! purity, sweet feeling, innocence, and childhood's faith too oft lie buried. Sin hath touched his life; and no phrase fair-sounding, philosophical, can cover up the moral evils of the world.

Beautiful picture the poet has given us of the soldier lying upon the battlefield dreaming of home, with all its tender associations and endearing fancies. One could gaze upon that picture with ever-increasing delight. But the pleasure is marred by the irony of fact. It is only a dream, from which the soldier must awaken to the carnage and the strife of war. Beautiful picture of poets and philosophers, that everything in life is working out satisfactorily by the slow process of self-evolving law. We would like to be optimistic. There is room for Christian optimism. But valueless is the optimism that cannot be interpreted in relation to the facts of life. Man sees the evil of the world. He is conscious of his sin, con-

scious of his freedom, conscious of an awful difference between what he is and what he ought to be. There are times when life seems shaken under him,

"Broken short, indeed,
And shows the gap between what is, what should be,
And into what abysm the soul may slip."

Like Paul he finds "a law in his members warring against the law of his mind." Too frequently he follows the lower instincts of his nature rather than the higher principles of his manhood. Too oft he takes the crown of character and hurls it in the dust. In his selfishness he tramples upon the rights of others. Unholy occupations feed upon the purity of society and the peace and happiness of home. Combinations pile the wealth of the world in the hands of a few. Peace and plenty sit smiling beside the tear-stained face of poverty and want. The rich boast of their privileges and forget their responsibilities. The spirit of jealousy is aroused. Man struggles blindly for his rights, and oft seemingly to little purpose. But when the atmosphere is cleared there is always something to be added to his knowledge and his faith. Clearer grows his ethical perception. Finer grows his sense of right and wrong. God lives in the struggle of human

life; in every pulse-beat of the moral and religious life of man. "As the meanest sapling in the forest," says Emerson, "is the embodiment of the principle of natural life, so the meanest and the poorest specimen of humanity is the embodiment of the life of God." To the lowest type of man the words of Browning will apply:

> "There is much in us waste and many a weed,
> And plenty of passion run to seed,
> But a little good grain, too."

In the "little good grain" of human life are possibilities of an infinite harvest, nourished and sustained by the summer heat of heaven. In every soul are tropical potencies awaiting spiritual atmosphere and sunshine to evoke both flower and fruit. To this end Christ has "tasted death for every man." He hath triumphed over evil, and calls man forth to war with sin and to ultimate victory over every foe. "We see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus"—the pledge and prophecy of the coming triumph.

. . . . . .

Jesus is the Ideal made actual, the life and inspiration of the soul. Only man can have ideals; for he is not of to-day, nor of to-morrow,

but of eternity. We cannot do without ideals. We are governed by them, whether consciously or unconsciously. Every act a man performs is done in relation to some end. That end, as he conceives it, is his highest good. It lays hold of his sympathies; it draws out his affections. He loves it, and lives for it. It becomes his ideal. It may be high. It may be low. It may be false. It may be true. Low ideals degrade. High ideals exalt. The Englishman, of whom Dr. Vandyke speaks, saw only the cash value of the iceberg if placed in a hot season on the market of Calcutta. But Coleridge heard those "silent cataracts of frozen splendor singing the eternal praise of God." The one saw the market. The other saw the beautiful, the sublime. The one tested everything by the rough thumb and finger of the world. The other looked beyond the material, and "worshipped the Invisible alone." The one was the worm with the clod. The other was the eagle with the sun.

"*That* has the world here—should he need the next,
Let the world mind him;
This throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find Him."

The story is told that the father of Michael Angelo, visiting his son at the Florentine

Academy of Art, found him at work with mallet and chisel upon a block of marble. "Is it a stonemason you would make my boy?" he indignantly asked. He did not know that the difference between a stonemason and a sculptor is an idea. When Angelo had embodied the ideal in stone—a David, fearless, self-reliant; a Moses, grand in his wisdom, majesty and strength—he became a famous artist. Idealism translated into marble makes the sculptor; translated upon the canvas makes the painter; translated into harmony of sound makes the musician; translated into words beautifully expressed makes the poet; but translated into life crowns manhood and womanhood, and exalts the nations of the earth. What made Greece supreme in art but the ideal of the beautiful? What made Rome mistress of the world but the ideal of simple, rugged manhood? What was the strength and glory of the Hebrew nation but the ideal of Monotheism wrought into the moral fibre of the people? And if the two great nations living under the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes are to fulfil their God-given mission in the civilization of the world, their statesmen must be governed by ideals higher than the market. The earthly ideal may bring momentary helpfulness, but no ideal lower than

the Christ can bring life and inspiration to the soul.

How inspiring is goodness! Not goodness Pharasaic; not goodness that exhausts itself in pious platitudes; but goodness that breathes in life as fragrance in a flower, that is the same upon the street as in the pew, in business as in the sanctuary. I remember an elder of a church over which I was pastor for two brief years, a Nathanael without guile, pure, clear, conscientious,

"Wearing the white flower of a blameless life."

I never talked with him without feeling that I was in the presence of a man of the finest moral worth. He was as unconscious of his goodness as a little child. But the very atmosphere that he carried with him was as bracing as a sea-breeze. True goodness evokes the admiration, and wins the confidence of others. Lord Peterborough, having stayed a few days with Fenelon, exclaimed: "If I stay another week with that man I cannot help being a Christian." The quiet influence of Livingstone converted Stanley in the wilds of Africa. The very thieves of London were impressed by the life of Lord Shaftesbury. The little ragged children on the streets of Portsmouth felt the influence

of John Pounds, the crippled cobbler. But the love of God, manifested in the perfect life and atoning death of Jesus, evokes all that is best in human life. Christ came to throne right over wrong, truth over error, virtue over vice, and to crown life with the glory of perfection. Say not, "The ideal is too high; I cannot attain unto it." It is the certainty of attainment that sends the Christian joyfully upon his way. Jesus is the Ideal without, but He is more: He is the principle of life within the soul of the believer. "I live," saith Paul, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." When the Christ without is also the life within, there can be no failure in the process of development. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" If Christ be with us, who can rob us of our spiritual heritage? Jesus lives that He may put all things beneath man's feet and slowly but surely He is lifting the world nearer to Himself.

There is a legend of a youth who was taken by an angel above the earth that he might view it as a whole. At first outlines of continents and of oceans appeared; then mountains, plains, rivers and great cities.

"Take me nearer," said the youth, "I wish to see man as he is."

The angel took him nearer; and everywhere he saw cruelty, wrong, and pitiless oppression. The darkest passions of the human heart—pride, vanity, envy, hatred, malice, selfishness—were at strife with man. Greed, avarice and hollow-hearted hypocrisy joined hands with vice and crime. The strong oppressed the weak, the rich the poor. The cry of the widow and the fatherless ascended up to God.

"Take me away!" he cried. "I have seen too much."

"You have not yet seen enough," replied the angel.

Coming nearer he saw that kindness, pity, and compassion dwelt upon the earth; that justice, righteousness and truth were grappling with the baser elements of human life.

Truth shines golden in this legendary setting. The world is cursed by sin. But

> "Is not God i' the world His power first made,
> Is not His love at issue still with sin?"

"My Father worketh hitherto and I work," says Jesus. And He will never cease His redemptive work until creation's week has reached its Sabbath, and all things have issued in good to those that love God. No meaningless optimism is the Christian faith. God lives

in it, as the ocean in the tide, as the sunlight in the harvest.

In one of George McDonald's novels Mrs. Faber bitterly asks: "I wonder why God made me? I am sure I do not know where was the use of making me."

"Perhaps not much yet," replied Dorothy. "But then He has not done with you yet. He is making you now, and you do not like it."

The world is still in the process of making. God has not yet completed His handiwork. Personality grows through trial. Character is oft forged in the fires of adversity. Through suffering and through pain God is redeeming souls that sin has marred. John Stuart Mill found fault with the Creator because of the imperfection of the world. But we cannot pass judgment upon a work until it is completed. When the artist has given the last touch to the statue, then, and not till then, is it ripe for critical judgment. But God has not yet finished His workmanship. He is holding the mallet and the chisel and is cutting away rough edges and coarse lines of character by delicate, and sometimes sharp and painful strokes.

Here is Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn-writer. "I never saw the face of my child," she pathetically relates; "but we shall look into

each other's eyes some day. God's goodness gave me the sacred joy of touching it, tending it, loving it. He holds it for me now." Through the discipline of the years her character was made beautiful as a flower, "fit to be gathered for the breast of God." She was physically blind, but she had the vision of the soul, and her song was heard even in the darkness of the night:

> "All the way my Father leads me,
> What have I to ask beside."

Somewhere have I read of Archbishop Thompson visiting an invalid who had been in the habit of leading the singing in the village chapel. He asked her to sing one of her favorite pieces, and with trembling voice she sang:

> "My God the spring of all my joys,
> The life of my delight,
> The glory of my brightest day,
> The comfort of my night."

Then, placing her thin hand upon the Archbishop's arm, and looking up into his face, she said: "It is true, my lord, it is true."

Again she sang:

> "In darkest shades if Thou appear—"

But her voice broke with emotion: "Fourteen years ago I buried my husband," she explained.

"My eldest son died seven years later and the youngest three years after that. I have had sorrow upon sorrow, difficulty upon difficulty; but it is true, it is true."

> "In darkest shades, if Thou appear,
> My dawning is begun;
> Thou art my soul's bright morning star,
> And Thou my rising sun."

Through suffering the world is being lifted nearer God. A world without pain would be a world without hero, martyr, saint. Socrates drank the hemlock. John the Baptist paid the price of righteousness in the gloomy fortress of Machaerus. Dante was driven into exile. Bunyan wrote his immortal allegory in prison. Back of every reform is the life-blood of the reformer. Behind Africa is Livingstone. Behind Uganda is McKay. Behind Patagonia is Allan Gardner. Back of slavery abolished is the martyrdom of Brown. Back of Christianity is the heart-blood of the Son of Man.

Life's trend is slowly upward. In spite of the secularizing tendencies of life, the shattering of creeds, and the indifference of many to the claims of the Church, Christianity is the world's great moral and spiritual dynamic. We smile at the idle prophecy of Voltaire, that

in a century Christianity would be destroyed root and branch, and that the Bible would remain only as a monument of human folly. But Christianity flourishes as the "tree planted by the rivers of waters," and within the century have been distributed 180,000,000 copies of the Word of God. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, and their secularist disciples founded "The Hall of Science," London, and lifted up their hands against Christianity and God. But the "Hall of Science" has long since become the property of General Booth, a refuge for the outcast and the homeless. Atheism has had its day. Positivism, as taught by Comte in his six ponderous octavo volumes, is stricken unto death. Few men of intellectual strength will subscribe to the philosophy of Haeckel. The prevailing sceptical philosophy is agnostic. But it lacks its old-time, hostile vigor, and finds expression, as someone has said, "in a wistful inability to accept the Christian facts." Amid the doubts and perplexities of life the cry is: "Back to Jesus." There are many who are asking, What would Jesus do? How can creed be translated into life, and doctrine into practice? How can the teaching of Jesus be applied to the social and political problems of the day? Jesus meant His teaching to be so translated.

The duties of citizenship are part of the duties of the kingdom of God. Religion is not for the stars, but for the streets. It has to do not with the Government of heaven, but of earth. "The kingdom of God is within you." And Jesus is the pledge of the coming triumph. Beyond the Cross and the empty grave is the sunlight of Resurrection, Heaven, Home, Immortality, God. The actual shall yet be ideal, and the ideal shall yet be actual; for "we see Jesus."

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW LAW OF LIFE.

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"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment."—MATT. 5. 21, 22.

JESUS came into the world with a new law, which He applied not so much to conduct as to character. He acted upon the principle that like begets like, whether in the natural or in the spiritual world. A good tree produces good fruit. A pure fountain sends forth pure water. The outward life is the expression of the life within. The words which I have quoted from Matthew illustrate my meaning. The old law said: "Thou shalt not kill." The new law says: "Thou shalt not be angry with thy brother." The old law looked at conduct. The new law looks at character. The old law looked at what a man did. The new law looks at what a man is. The old law sought to prevent the

sinful act. The new law seeks the same end; but seeks it through the repression of the sinful desires and impulses of the soul.

That is unique legislation. Imagine Parliament legislating against unholy ughts and imaginations. As says the author of "The Men of the Beatitudes": "Your soul may be a veritable hell, your mind may teem with black, licentious and passionate thoughts, your memory may live amid tragical, bloody and rebellious scenes; but so long as the tongue is still, and the hand is guiltless, and the feet refrain—before the State and all her la s you are a white and unoffending man." But Jesus places evil thoughts, aspirations and desires under law. Obedience to Christ's New Law would prevent all State legislation. There would be no need of courts, juries, judges and assizes. Every other law would be suppressed; and life would be governed by the higher law of love.

Do you say that such legislation is impossible? If we cannot keep the old how can we keep the new? If it is so difficult to govern actions, how can we control the thoughts and desires of the heart? Jesus holds the answer to these questions, and He will tell it to all who will listen and obey. He who has given the new law will give power to observe it. He is both Legislator and Creator. He can create within the soul new

impulses and desires that shall grapple with and overcome the old. He throws around the soul influences that restrain; but rarely does He seek to restrain man by appealing to his fears.

Thank God for every motive that will keep the soul from sinning. But the fear of punishment is not a great motive. There is a greater; it is self-respect. To awaken our self-respect Jesus shows us the value of manhood. He reveals the beauty of His own divine character, and makes us dissatisfied with what we are. No self-respecting man will wear upon his hands and face the soilure of the street. When his work is over he will hasten to his bath. With the awakening of that deeper self-respect that touches manhood we will not be content with the soilure of the world. When we feel the dignity of living, the nobility of life, the grandeur of being loyal, loving, useful, true, then are we looking Godward. Then are we following the new law of divinely implanted self-respect.

It is said that the French artist Meissonier would erase whole pictures if they did not satisfy him. Customers might praise and offer to buy; but turning a deaf ear to their flatteries, and a blind eye to their gold, he would say: "I have some one more difficult to please than you. I must satisfy myself." Standing at the grave

of Regnault, friend and fellow-artist, slain at the siege of Paris, he exclaimed in a speech of impassioned patriotism: "If I long to leave a painter's fame behind, I desire even more to leave the name of a man."

To awaken self-respect and a sense of the supreme worth of manhood with its infinite possibilities is the aim of the new law of the Son of Man. What shall a man give in exchange for his manhood? Is it fame? Where are your contented Bismarcks? Is it wealth? Where are your happy millionaires whose millions have been gained at the expense of principle? Is it unbridled ambition? Upon the banks of a little rivulet in England a lad of seven years lay dreaming of the fallen fortunes of his father's house. He would redeem the lost estate, and become Warren Hastings of Daylesford. He lived to realize his dream; but he so trampled upon the rights of others that when an old man of seventy he was impeached for crimes and misdemeanors before the House of Lords. Is it pleasure? I need not quote the case of Byron, who took pleasure to be his god, but who in his thirty-sixth year wrote the melancholy confession:

> "The worm, the canker and the grief
> Are mine alone."

Every soul has its secret desires. Like Tantalus, in the Greek legend, man chases the phantom pleasure. He is near it, upon it, but he loses it. It sports and smiles and laughs and tantalizes his soul, but leaves him disappointed. Does the world offer its tempting fruit? Do not buy at the expense of character. Does the world offer its tempting pleasures? Do not accept at the expense of manhood. Turn thy back upon the tempter. In the strength of Jesus thou mayst overcome. In the presence of Jesus thou wilt desire to overcome. "The soldier marching with his regiment feels that he must keep step, and the singer in the choir that he must keep in tune. And when the world is felt to be the house of God, then, like a native thing, words are true, thoughts are pure, and the soul stands splendidly erect, dressed in white." In the presence of the Son of Man we feel that we must think aright, walk aright, live aright. This comes from Christ's new law governing the inner life.

Jesus values right attitude of soul. He is pleased when we are facing right. He will bear patiently with many failures and mistakes if we are looking towards Himself, and earnestly desiring to put into operation the new law that He imposes upon thoughts, feelings and desires.

He sees much that is good in the worst of us. He sees much that is bad in the best of us. But He is not looking for the worst that is in us. That is man's way. Christ is more interested in the beautiful and the true than in the ugly and the false.

Some one charged Joel Chandler Harris, the author of the Uncle Remus Stories, with making the negro appear better than he really was by dealing with his good qualities to the exclusion of the bad.

"Now, honestly, Mr. Harris," asked the critic, "wouldn't Uncle Remus steal chickens if he got the chance?"

With a characteristic laugh the author replied: "If I follow the old man all day you cannot expect me to follow him all night, too."

To see the good and the wholesome in human life, without too critically examining the failures and mistakes, is Christlike. Jesus cannot tolerate sin; but He has infinite compassion for the sinner. He who in the days of His ministry swept aside the cold, critical judgment of Simon the Pharisee, and gave His boundless sympathy to the penitent at His feet, still watches for the good within the soul. The upward look, the turning of the heart to God are precious in His sight. And when we believe

and trust and love and do our best to make practical the new law that governs thoughts, feelings and desires, and still feel that we have come short, He will not misunderstand, but will take the will to do for the deed undone.

The Emperor of Germany, Maximilian I., walking one day on the parapet of the minster-place in the city of Breisnach, on the Upper Rhine, saw a boy planting a rose-bush in a niche in the wall.

"What are you doing there?" asked the Emperor.

"I am planting a rose-bush for God," said the boy.

"Do you believe that the Lord will rejoice very much over that?" asked Maximilian.

With the frankness and beautiful simplicity of childhood the little fellow replied: "Well, I have nothing better; and He will accept the best I have."

A little child's philosophy! But did not Jesus make the little child a pattern for His disciples? A little child's philosophy! But it is also the philosophy of the sage. It was not a little child, but Robert Browning, who wrote:

"'Tis not what man does which exalts him, but what man would do."

God does not judge us according to attain-

ments, but according to our attitude of soul towards the truth. In the hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, in the aspirations and the longings that break beyond the limits of attainment, Jesus sees infinite possibilities of development. Jesus passes judgment upon dedesires that are good as well as upon desires that are bad. Does He condemn the evil? He approves the good. He says: "Mine eye is upon thee, do thy best for my sake, and I will lead thee at thy grandest to the grave."

An Italian painter, Andrew Verrocchio, having begun a picture, was unable through the infirmities of old age to complete it. I[illegible]ked his pupil, Da Vinci, to undertake the ta[illegible]ut the youth shrank from the responsibility. The old man, anxious for the completion of the picture, said pleadingly: "Do your best, Da Vinci, for my sake." Touched by the appeal the lad undertook the work. He did his best for his master's sake; and there came to him a new sense of responsibility. New powers and aspirations were awakened. The strength of genius came upon him. The picture completed was such a triumph of art that the old man wept for very joy.

The application is plain. Do your best; and do it for the Master's sake. Do your best; and

it will bring to the soul a new sense of responsibility. It will awaken nobler feelings, aspirations and desires that shall grapple with the old. Be true to the best that you know, and the new law of Jesus will become practical in life. There can be no ultimate failure for the man who in the strength of Jesus does his best. There can be no failure for the man who in Christ's name faces the issue between good and evil. The new law of the Son of Man will become a part of life itself.

My brother, battling with temptations, wrestling with difficulties and with duties, do you say: "I have tried to live under Christ's new law. I have tried, and failed. I will try no more." Listen to a parable of the sun:

The sun rose one morning brilliant, clear. It lingered for a moment upon the hills, and then sent its rays into the valleys. The snow melted from the meadows, and retreated from the woods. The little brooks, released from winter's grip, went singing on their way. A violet sprang up beside a scarred and battered tree. It was a prophecy of summer; and soon the valleys rejoiced in freedom and in flowers. The birds sang in the leafy branches; and the harvests ripened in the fields. "I am victor," said the sun; "how easily I triumphed over frost and

snow." But the days grew colder. The sun shone and shone, but it could not warm the air. The leaves withered, and fell; and the winds swept them down the hollows of the shadow-haunted hills. Did the sun say: "I will try no more." Ah, no! It lifted its face up to God; and He whispered a promise that sank into its heart: "While time lasts summer, seed-time and harvest shall not fail."

My brother, do you say that the way was once so bright, and the victory so easy; but now darkness and defeat? Do you complain that the winds of temptation are cold and keen, and life's hopes like the autumn leaves are scattered to the earth? Look upwards to thy God. The Son of Man is near thee to cheer thy fainting heart. If thou wilt listen thou mayest hear His promise that the summer and the harvest of thy life shall never fail if thou wilt do thy best for the Master's sake, and leave the rest with God. Let thy light shine if thou wouldst learn the secret of the life of Jesus; the secret of His own new law that breaks the power of sin, purifies the heart and crowns life with loving-kindness and tender mercies. It is unique legislation. But Jesus is a unique Legislator. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." This is Christ's divine New Law of life.

CHAPTER VII.

THE THREE-FOLD VALUE OF LIFE

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"Behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, . . . but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."—I. KINGS 19. 11, 12.

There is no more striking character in Old Testament history than Elijah, cleaving his way through the crowd to the goal of national purity. No gentle soul was he. There was iron in his blood; granite in his will; rough and stern as his native hills.

Folly were it to complain of the temper of reformers. Softness pertains not to a sword, nor dulness to a wedge. Gentleness is not found in fire, nor hesitation in a bullet. The sword cuts; the wedge cleaves; the fire burns; the bullet seeks the mark. Aberdeen granite calls for hammer and chisel. Rocks are mined by gunpowder. Great moral reforms call for

men of fire and steel. Luther's words were half-drawn swords. Lloyd Garrison saw the goal of abolition, and moved straight forward, regardless of hate, and scorn, and prison walls. Beneath the dark shaggy brows of Savonarola the fires of a great soul flashed in righteous indignation against the vices of the age. Spurning the bribe of a cardinal's hat, he exclaimed in words prophetic: "No hat will I have but that of a martyr, reddened by my own blood." Polity, suavity, caution, compromise, are not qualities of reformers. But the wedge of reform should ever be driven by the hand of love.

This was Elijah's weakness. He was deficient in human sympathies. He lacked the finer quality of love. In his zeal for righteousness he depended largely upon physical means, famine, drought, and the slaughter of the priests of Baal. He won a temporary triumph at Carmel. But forsaken by the people, Jezebel sought his life and he fled. The failure almost broke his heart, and he prayed for death. God did not take away his life. He was training him in the school of experience. He was fitting him for the larger work of life. And in the whirlwind that swept the Mount of Horeb, in the earthquake that shook the rocks, in the fire that outlined the hills in flashing,

quivering light Elijah heard the storm-notes of his own past life and the noisy acclamations of the people that had swept the sides of Carmel. He learned for the first time that God was not in these, but in the still small voice of his own personal influence, in the conscience of the 7,000 that had not bowed down to Baal, and in the evangel of love that lives at the heart of things and will not let life fall asunder. It was a revelation for all time of the three-fold value of life in its relation to the *individual, humanity, God.*

. . . . . .

"Every human life has a three-fold value," says Rev. R. J. Campbell. "It has value for itself and in itself; it has value for the total life of humanity: it has value for God." Deep down beneath the noisy forces of the world, loud-mouthed as the elements on Horeb, is the still small voice of character, conscience, love. Love enriches conscience and blossoms into character. Character reveals life's worth. Every claim demands proof. Are you an artist? Produce your picture. Are you a poet? Produce your poem. An author? Publish your book. A musician? Let us hear you at the keys. A Christian? Reveal your character in action. Character is the measure of

the man; but the influence of character is immeasurable.

How great was the influence of the late Quintin Hogg. Mr. Robert Mitchell, one of his "boys," who knew the power of his loving personality, tells of "Jem Nichols, as wild a character as one ever met, and yet whose heart had been softened and his life changed by the gentle teaching" of their mutual friend. Meeting him one day upon the street he asked, in friendly greeting:

"Well, Jem, how are you getting along now?"

And Nichols replied: "Bob, I have a bit of trouble in keeping straight, but, thank God! all is well. You see I always carry with me a photo of Quintin Hogg, and whenever I am tempted, I just take this out, and his look is a wonderful help, and by the grace of God I am able to overcome."

A recent writer tells us that whenever mean and unworthy ambitions have captivated him, and he has been tempted to accept the convenient for the right, and the useful for the true; his first impulse has been to turn to a portrait of James Martineau that hangs in his study. And, he adds, that "no man guilty of shufflingly bantering with truth can look into

the face of Martineau, just as no pessimistic idler can face the memory of Charles Kingsley."

It is character that tells; character that has God in it and behind it, and is governed by the principles of fidelity to duty. Character is power, reality, achievement. God fights the moral battles of the world through characters fitted for His purpose. Their ideals have been forged in the white heat of conviction, welded in the fires of opposition. They have been thrust to the front by the hand of circumstances, or rather, by the hand of God, who guides the currents of national history. He calls David from the hills of Bethlehem, Gideon from a threshing-floor, Elijah from the hills of Gilead, Amos from the sheep-fold, Elisha from the plough, Peter from a fishing boat, Cromwell from the plains of Huntingdonshire, and Washington from his Virginian plantation. They hear the still small voice of duty and obey, and the influence of their lives becomes a permanent force in the uplifting of the world. Such characters are found in the humblest as well as in the most exalted walks of life.

I see her yet, old and infirm, locks whitening like the snow, a smile striving with the wrinkled face, her form bending beneath a

weight of years and sorrow. She had known life's trials. "God laid a great burden upon me," she began. "I felt it was from God, and I took it up and carried it for twenty-one years. My daughter was bereft of reason. I could not bear to part with her. For twenty-one years I cared for her, until God took her to Himself. It has broken me in body"—with her faded apron she wiped away a tear from her still more faded cheek. Then a smile lit up her face, like the light of setting sun at the close of cloudy day, and she added, "but it did not break my spirit."

These are God's great ones. They feel the burdens of the world. They share in the sorrows of others. They take up the task, and bear the burden without a murmur or complaint. The world may never know them. They are not swept along in the whirlwind of popular approval. But the angels see them. God whispers His secret to their hearts, and with splendid purpose they go forth to obey the voice of duty, which is the voice of God. But the cost, the sacrifice, the surrender, who can know?

One day upon Princeton campus I met a post-graduate who had been for a few years in the active work of the ministry. "Once I was

ambitions," said he, "to become a great preacher, to have a large audience, and to win applause; but now," he added, "I have but one desire, to win souls for Jesus Christ."

As I looked into that frank, honest face, and into those great black, earnest eyes I knew that he had passed through the Elijah experience, at what cost of heart-ache and of disappointment I knew not. It costs something to shut out the world, and to listen to the still small voice of duty within a man's own soul. It cost Elijah the heart-break of an awful disappointment. But blessed is the man who is willing to pay the cost. To fail in the hour of duty; to stand face to face with a living issue, and to put popularity before principle; or "because of the sacrifice involved to palter with truth, to juggle with conscience, and finally to take the line of least resistance," is to suffer great spiritual loss. The lack of fidelity to duty leads to darkness. The path of duty leads upward to the light. Up the rugged slope is the resting-place and the larger vision. Elim is not far from Marah. The desert has its fountain for the sorrow-sobbing Hagar. There are rest and refreshment for the weary, heart-sore prophet. The light breaks at the close of the darkest day. "Blessed is the man

who, when the tempest has spent its force, recognizes the voice of his Father in the undertone;" and who, bowing in submission to the God of Elijah goes forth to do life's work both manfully and well. There can be no failure in such a life. No work done in the name of the Master can ever be lost. The arrow shot from the bow of truth, and the song that has left the lips of the singer will be found again, even though it be after many days. Truth, therefore, in the singing of the poet:

"I shot an arrow into the air;
It fell to earth I know not where;
For so swift it flew the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

"I breathed a song into the air;
It fell to earth I know not where;
For who hath sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song.

"Long, long afterwards in an oak
I found the arrow still unbroke,
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend."

Draw the bow of truth even though it be at a venture, and the arrow will find its mark. Sing the glad sweet solo of a Saviour's love. Sing it until it finds its way into the hearts of the

lonely, the cheerless, and the desolate, and leave the rest with God.

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Every human life has also a value for humanity. Scripture and science proclaim the solidarity of the race. And the fulcrum of the lever in humanity's uplift is the conscience of the people. Deeper than the loud-mouthed voices of evil is the still small voice of conscience, the hope of the world, the ballast of the ship of state, the sheet anchor of the Church. Elijah was the first to discover that good lives in the midst of evil, right in the midst of wrong, and that nothing can o'erthrow them.

Ours is an age of general unsettlement. There is a sifting of creeds, a testing of social foundations, a feeling of uncertainty, restlessness, doubt. The air is filled with the sounds of clashing interests. Jealousy burns with the fierceness of a flame. Man struggles for his rights, and selfishness replies that "business is not mission work, but the survival of the fittest." The moral coarseness of the saying sends a shudder through one's frame. True, the fittest must survive. Incapacity must go down before genius. Level society to-day and to-morrow the inequalities will reappear. But

genius owes a debt to mediocrity, and wealth to poverty. The selfishness that will not discharge that debt, that rates men lower than dividends, will perpetuate, as long as it exists, the tramp upon the street, the children of the slums, the half-paid mother toiling under some sweating system in wretched garret. It will tend to weaken morality, to loosen the grip upon spiritual realities, and to lower the tone of manhood and of womanhood. Society thus based is hopelessly wrong, and proves its own unfitness to survive.

Foolish is it, however, to imagine that wrongs may be righted by methods that are violent. Elijah tried it and he failed. What has class hatred ever accomplished for humanity? In the French Revolution twenty-five millions of hungry, down-trodden, infuriated peasants arose with pikes and swords to massacre and pillage. Revolution with its madness, horror, murder, tears of mothers and of children, pitiful farewells, and the dull thud of the guillotine, swept on its blood-stained way. Royalist, Girondist, Jacobin, Dantonism, Hebertism, and the tyranny of Robespierre went down in quick succession. But the open sore of France was not healed thereby. Such methods are the whirlwind, the earthquake and the fire, in

which God is not. But He is ever found in the still small voice of the conscience of the people. And the age is awaiting its prophet—whose voice shall so awaken the conscience of the individual and the nation that justice shall find embodiment not only in social law, but in the unwritten law of righteousness in a man's own soul, without which justice can never be complete. Have faith in humanity. Have faith in God. He lives in every moral pulse-beat of this great but wicked world. In the conscience of the people there is hope; and the true reformer never calls in vain.

History abounds in illustrations. Here is Lord Shaftesbury like some noble knight going forth to slay the dragon of social wrong. Terrible was the condition of women and little children toiling in the factories and the mines of England during the first half of the nineteenth century, toiling under conditions that degraded body, mind and soul. England was callous to their wrongs. But Lord Shaftesbury founded shelters, schools, and industrial institutes, and championed their cause in Parliament. It took him twenty years to pierce the conscience of the nation. But he pierced it. And Parliament spoke in language that brought a measure of relief to the industrially

oppressed. When he died a nation mourned his loss. Little children cast their flowers, wet with tears, upon his coffin. And no grander tribute was ever paid to man than that inscribed upon the banners of the boys from the ragged schools: "I was hungry and ye fed me."

Here is John Brown on his way to execution, stooping amid the curses of the soldiers to kiss a little negro child, saying, as he ascends the scaffold: "God sees that I am of more use to hang them for any other purpose." "The South loved slavery. The North sympathized. The great majority of the civilized world approved. The abolitionists were few and fearful." But Brown had the courage of his convictions. And six years after he kissed the little negro child a million men followed the spirit of the hero of Harper's Ferry to emancipate the slave. He had found the conscience of the people. Through blood and tears, and shot and shell the triumph rolled, and slavery was doomed.

Here is General Booth standing in Whitechapel, blood-stained, mud-stained, friendless and moneyless, facing the howling mob whom he longed to save. The world sneered at him as a vulgar fanatic, a low enthusiast. But twenty-five years later ten thousand people, judges,

statesmen, mayors, authors, members of the Stock Exchange, the middle and the poorer classes gathered in Albert Hall to do him honor. What made the change? The man had girdled the world with societies, officers, rescue homes, shelters, food depots. His noble self-sacrificing spirit thrilled the conscience of the people, sneers became smiles, hostility became friendship.

Many followers, but few great leaders. Many loving hearts, willing hands, self-sacrificing lives, tugging, God-like, at the abuses of the world. Reform is in the air, educational, social, sanitary, temperance, and many others. But the great leader is wanting. It is "an age of mediocrity and of commonplaces," says Dr. Watson. He complains that "no great men are rising, no poet, no moralist, no statesman, no painter, no preacher." He quotes the words of Matthew Arnold as being truer to-day than when he wrote "Oberman Once More."

> "Your creeds are dead, your rites are dead,
> Your social order, too.
> Where tarries He, the power who said,
> See, I make all things new?"

The great man poet, painter, preacher, moralist, statesman flourishes in the age of idealism. He dreams his dreams and sees his vision of the

open heaven, and with eternity in his heart he goes forth to kingly conquest over evil as "ever in the eye of the great Taskmaster." But this is an age of criticism, and of bald realism, and, therefore, an age of mediocrity. Creeds are falling asunder. Landmarks are being removed. Old methods are proving inadequate. Men are hesitating, halting, wandering like sheep without a shepherd. They are standing at the parting of the ways looking for a guide. They are listening, not for a message of doubt, uncertainty, guesses, inferences, negations, denials, but for the voice that speaks "with authority and not as do the Scribes." Is the Church delivering that message? Is she equal to the opportunity? Is she speaking with the authority that touches the conscience, restrains the forces of evil, moulds public opinion, and makes for national and social righteousness? Her work is to found the Kingdom of God among men. If she fail God will perform His work without her. But she ought not to fail. There should be a searching of hearts, a wrestling in prayer for the divine power that has ever manifested itself in all great crises of the world's history. Witness Pentecost, the Reformation, Puritanism, Methodism, and the Broad Church movement of the nineteenth cen-

tury. The Church awaits her leader, a Moses, a John the Baptist, a Luther, a Wesley, clothed with divine power, possessing the insight of faith and love, seeing to the heart of things, throwing himself with noble abandon and with the courage of his convictions into the struggle for righteousness, awakening the conscience of the age, turning men to noble ideals, bringing rich and poor into fellowship with God, and clothing life with the self-sacrifice of social service.

The spirit of the age calls for social regeneration. Every revival in the past, as a writer has recently pointed out, has rested upon some great truth called forth by the circumstances of the time. The Reformation, protesting against Romish errors, was based upon justification by faith. Puritanism, protesting against the tyranny of kings, threw itself at the feet of the sovereignty of God. Wesley, protesting against the foul, fleshly scepticism of his day, proclaimed the new birth. Moody, touched by the humanitarian spirit of the age, preached the love of God. "Can ye not read the signs of the times?" "Not individualism, but collectivism is the watchword of the hour." May it not be that from the soil of social service shall burst forth the flower of the New Revival. All the

elements of the past, the love of God, the sovereignty of God, the new birth, and living faith will be there; but a larger meaning will be given to the Brotherhood of Man. Men will be burdened with a sense of social righteousness. Character shall stand before wealth, and social service before pleasure. The rich will no longer "oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and turn aside the stranger from his rights." Paying the debt of social service, as N. Dwight Hillis would say, class hatred dies. The wolf cradles with the lamb and the leopard with the kid.

Is the picture too optimistic? Nay, verily! Good lives in the midst of evil, right in the midst of wrong, and nothing can o'erthrow them.

It was Charles Kingsley who said, as he struggled with a London fog: "Is not this like life? There is a deep yellow fog all around, with a dim light here and there showing through. You grope your way from one lamp to another, and you go up wrong streets and back again, but you get home at last. There is always light enough for that." Dark is the night, dense is the fog of doubt and sin, but the light of Calvary pierces the darkness at many points, and there is light enough for

every soul that will follow the gleam. Slowly but surely the light breaks. There is a growing moral sensitiveness to the injustice and the wrongs of life. There is a new charity that gives the giver with the gift in social service. Blind force has yielded to intellect. A conscienceless intellect must yield to morality and religion; for God lives in every pulse-beat of the higher life of man. We hear His voice in "the spiritual tides of passion and of thought, in the cry for freedom and for order, in the search for certitude and light." The world is not given over to evil because Jezebel may have the triumph of a day. There is a religious element in every life. There are possibilities of good in every soul. There are broken chords that touched by the hand of love may vibrate once more to the music of manhood and of womanhood. Jesus has died to redeem the world, and out of its moans He will yet bring the music of redemption. Have faith in thyself. Have faith in humanity. Have faith in God. Have faith in Christ. Let thy light shine to guide the benighted traveller upon his way. There is light enough for that.

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Every human life has value, not only for itself and for humanity, but for God. The

first two values depend upon the third. Character and the finest human sympathies derive their worth from the upward look. We were created in the image of God. We were meant for God. The stamp of divinity is upon the soul, though sin has done its best to efface it.

> "The truth in God's breast
> Lies trace for trace on ours impressed,
> Though He is so bright and we so dim,
> We were made in His image to witness Him."

And when human life has found its threefold value, then has descended from heaven the mystic city which John saw, whose length, and breadth, and height were equal—perfect character, perfect sympathy for humanity, perfect love for God.

The union between the finite and the Infinite is the meeting-place of love. "We love Him because He first loved us." This was the third lesson that God taught Elijah at Horeb. Deep down beneath the noisy voices of the whirlwind, the earthquake, and the fire Elijah heard not only the voice of duty and of conscience, but the still small voice of love. Strange that in the stormy life of the man of Gilead we should hear that voice. It is the secret of Jesus hidden in the Old Testament. It is the sweet story of Bethlehem whispering

in the heart of prophecy. It has been singing ever since, singing with the gladness of the heart of a little child, and exercising a mightier power than the whirlwind of human passion and of strife. There is power in the sunlight painting flowers, mellowing fruit, and ripening harvests. But how great is the power of love that chastens the thoughts, refines the feelings, purifies the affections, and beautifies the life until the very body becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost.

Herein is life's highest value. It is the consciousness of childhood, of sonship, of the Over-Life that gives content to character, and power and usefulness to ministry. Every soul may possess this value. He who loses his life must bear the responsibility. Jesus never despised any man. The outcasts of society were precious in His sight. Jesus never despaired of any man. He saw possibilities of good in all. He never rejected any man. He drew suffering, sinning humanity to His loving heart. He saw flowers among weeds, gold shining in the cruder ore, the over-arching heaven of immortality mirrored in the lake of human life. He would say to all, as Bishop Myriel to Jean Valjean: "My brother, you belong no more to evil, but to good. It is your

soul that I am buying for you. I withdraw it from dark thoughts and the spirit of perdition, and would give it back to God." Jesus came to give life, abundant life, the three-fold life. He speaks to us with the still small voice of love; and He has a right to speak. He has created and redeemed us, and would lead us forth to victory over sin and death and the powers of darkness. Oh, say not, in the language of the Lotus-Eaters:

> "Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
> To war with evil? Is there any peace
> In ever climbing up the climbing wave?"

With eternity in thine heart and the light of sonship upon thy brow, go forth to war with evil and to climb the climbing wave of opposition to the truth. And when the forces of evil, like Jezebel, seem triumphant, and effort seems ineffectual, and there is no lifting of the load, no clearing of the way, no breaking of the cloud, then listen for thy Father's voice amid the storm. In the undertone thou mayest hear it calling thee to take up thy task and do it manfully and well. Then thou mayest go thy way, and sing thy song, and do thy work; for thy Father's smile is upon thee, and thou hast caught the secret of the love of God that gives life its three fold value, and tells of service and of sacrifice, of heaven and of home.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOUR-FOLD VISION OF LIFE

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"I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."
—Acts 26. 19.

Wonderful character was Paul, the transformed persecutor, with the great brain and the greater heart. For the sake of an idea he suffers derision, insult, persecution. He is stoned on the streets of Lystra, scourged in the city of Philippi, driven from Thessalonica and Berea, mocked at Athens, mobbed in Ephesus, persecuted in Jerusalem, sent as a prisoner to Rome, shipwrecked upon the way, lodged in a Roman dudgeon, and finally beheaded, the victim of Neronian hate. But wherever he went he was the masterful disciple, impressing his personality upon others, and from literary, military and commercial centres his influence was felt throughout the great, wide Roman world. Paul had found Christ in experience and "was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

Man has ever dreamed his dreams and seen his visions. But everything depends upon the content of the dream and the meaning of the vision. There are dreams of flesh as well as dreams of soul. There are dreams of earth as well as dreams of God. Only man is capable of the higher vision, for he is the child of eternity. He was made for vision. Within his soul is the "divine discontent."

> "He looks before and after,
> And sighs for what is not."

"And what are the visions or ideals by which men live?" asks a great London preacher. He answers: "There are four: the vision of the mind, which is progress; of the heart, which is love; of the soul, which is faith; and of the moral nature, which is duty." These are the visions heavenly that challenge the obedience of man.

I.

THE VISION OF THE MIND.

Paul was a master logician, the scholar of the School of Hillel, the pupil of the great Gamaliel, the preacher of the Gentiles. But he was not indebted for his message to books, libraries, and universities. He did not depend for his authority upon gowns, crosses and the laying on of the hands of presbyter or bishop. His message was not an essay, but a Gospel; not a recitation, but a revelation; not the unburdening of the memory, but the unburdening of the soul. He tells us that he never received his message from man, nor was he taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The great intellect never grasped the problem of redemption until Christ became a fact in experience. Then intellect lifted experience into thought, and gave it a theological setting.

Theology is the vision of the mind. It is the reflective interpretation of the facts of Divine revelation. The present age is marked by an impatience of theology, as though it were a dead weight upon the progress of practical religion. But religion has never been more

practical than when grounded in intelligent conviction. Evangelical Christianity has nothing to gain by sacrificing intellectual interest in theology. God claims the homage of the intellect as well as of the heart, the devotion of the Magi as well as of the shepherds of the plain. The river that does not flow must stagnate. The machinery that does not run must rust. The arm that does not move must palsy. The brain that does not think must dull. To think is to interpret, to interpret is to theorize, to theorize is to possess a theology. Man cannot help having a theology unless he stops thinking.

For the same reason no theology can be final. The intellect can never adequately express the complex religious experiences of life, nor can it adequately unfold the revelation of the Son of God. Who can fathom the Atonement upon its Divine side? Who can sound the depths of spiritual experience where the finite touches the Infinite and the soul finds God? There are heights that we cannot measure. There are depths that we cannot take. Facts are greater than theories. The Christ of experience is greater than any theory about Him. Theories change; but facts never. Philosophy changes; but the laws and principles of phenomena and facts are unaffected thereby.

Astronomy changes; but the sun burns on with quenchless lustre and the stars shine forth in myriad splendor. Theology changes; but the great facts of God, Christ, Christian experience, duty, conscience, immortality abide. The vision of the mind means progress whether in science, philosophy, or theology. There can be no finality; but there can be no turning back. As "the view of the mountain climber changes the higher he ascends," so with every uplift of humanity there comes a broader view of truth. Worse things, therefore, are there than to shake

> **"This torpor of assurance from our creed."**

and set men thinking. The vision of the mind means progress, and progress is the law of life.

There is a criticism, however, that is cold, hard, narrow and more dogmatic than the theology it assails. It writes infallibility upon every theory of science, and would limit all knowledge to mathematical tests. Heine has said, that in seeking to justify itself religion "would prate itself into destruction." But there are more things in life than are comprehended by the man who uses natural data as a basis for religious conclusions. To ignore the richest and the deepest facts of life, and to

prize doubt as a weapon with which to assail the Christian faith are wide the mark. Christianity welcomes all honest, reverent criticism. Nothing can overthrow truth but a higher truth, and that is truth's gain. Faith is intelligent. Christ's claims are rational. Jesus has provided a reasonable salvation for reasonable man. He challenges thought as well as feeling. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy *mind* as well as with all thy heart. Not a passing glance, but the earnest gaze of the astronomer reveals the beauty of worlds swinging in space, where thought grows weary and imagination fails. It requires more than a passing thought, more than a momentary consideration to behold the beauty of the Christ. When Jesus touches mind as well as heart, intellect as well as affections, the truth of His character will grow upon us, and catching the inspiration of His life we shall go forth to nobler things.

I remember sitting in my study, in college days, intent upon my work, when a fellow-student suddenly exclaimed:

"I have it! I have it!"

He had found the solution of a very difficult mathematical problem. He had carried it in his note-book, nay in his mind, for years. At

intervals he sought to solve it; and at length it yielded to the power of concentrated mental effort.

Oh, for this fixed determination to consider Christ! How it would clothe life with divine power and purpose! How the grandeur of His character would inspire us! How the greatness of His purpose would uplift us! If amid the rush, and the hurry, and the turmoil of the years man would pause and think of the great facts of life and death, duty and eternal destiny, and of the greatness of the Saviour's love overmatching the greatness of the sinner's need, the reasonableness of religion would impress him; and the truth piercing the intellect would move the conscience and the will.

In a certain work of fiction the author analyzes the character of a young girl, Florimel, light-hearted, thoughtless, frivolous. In her superficial way she is correctly orthodox, but she does not hesitate to deny God in practice when the pleasures and vanities of life clamor for recognition.

Her friend, Clementina, is immersed in doubt. It is not moral doubt that comes from a perverted character, but doubt intellectual that would reason its way into the light. One day, discussing the existence of God, she ex-

claimed: "I would give all that I possess to know that there is a God worth believing in!"

With a look of horror Florimel replied: "Clementina! Of course there is a God! It is very horrible to deny it!"

"But which is worse," replied Clementina, "to deny it, or to deny Him? Now I confess to doubting it—that is, the fact of God; but you seem to me to deny God Himself; for you admit there is a God. You think it very wicked to deny that, yet you do not take interest enough in Him to wish to learn anything about Him. You do not *think,* Florimel. I do not fancy you ever really *think.*"

Is it not the bitterest irony of life that we have so much to think about that we fail to think of the highest facts of life. We think it very foolish to disbelieve in the existence of God; and so it is. We think it very wrong to have no religious creed; and so it is. But do we forget that it is equally wrong and foolish to be content with a superficial orthodoxy that leaves God embodied in a creed instead of in a life. Truth grows by contemplation. Would we have a clearer vision of God? Then tarry with the Christ in thoughtful meditation. Think of the sublime teaching of the Master; blessings

falling from His lips like evening dew; beatitudes shining in parable, miracle and sermon, like stars shining in the sky. Linger with Him on the Mount and in the Upper Room, at the Cross, and by the empty grave. Find Jesus in experience, lift experience into the realm of thought and Christ will fill the furthest heaven of life. Be not disobedient to the heavenly vision—the vision of the mind.

II.

THE VISION OF THE HEART.

The vision of the mind is progress. The vision of the heart is love. There is a tendency to make a cleavage between intellect and feeling. But man cannot be divided into "water-tight compartments." Love must be rational; and reason must be loving. Love has no quarrel with knowledge. Heart cannot be divorced from head. Man cannot love that which he does not know; nor know that which he does not love. Love with its fine insight becomes knowledge. Knowledge "enamored of its task becomes love." The battle is not between head and heart, but between the spiritual facts of life and the speculative side of the intellect that would measure everything in heaven and in earth by scales, telescopes, and yard sticks.

Man cannot live by intellect alone. He needs the vision of the heart. Life's highest progress is not material. The Golden Age of life is measured by the Golden Rule of Love.

How great was the material progress of the nineteenth century. The torch of liberty, kindled at the flame of the French Revolution,

was passed to Europe. Mazzini fought for Italian freedom. Kossuth battled for Hungarian independence. Lord Ashley struggled for the rights of England's toilers in factory and in mine. In the new world democracy, like a young giant, carved out cities of freedom and statues of liberty. Men dreamed their dreams of democracy, and saw visions of science in the vast possibilities of electricity and steam. Dazzled by such visions many forgot God. They "took Him to the confines of the universe and bowed Him out." They said unto science, democracy, and natural religion: "These be thy gods, O Israel, that shall lead thee to the promised land, that shall annihilate war, conquer disease and pain, arrest misery and crime, and pluck sharpness from the sting of poverty and want." It was a daring dream, but it has not been realized. Democracy has come; so has Tammany. Science has exceeded the wildest dreams of invention and discovery but war is with us yet. Injustice oft sits under the shadow of liberty, and selfishness, lust and social wrongs abound. Natural religion has no power to stay sin's devastating progress. Sin is not the removable product of environment. It is deeper than the readjustment of the social circumstances of life.

Is it not Bellamy who likens humanity to a rose-bush planted in a swamp, breathing fog by day and poison dews by night? To thrive and bloom it must be transplanted into warm, rich soil, where the sun bathes it, the stars woo it, and the soft south winds caress it.

This parable implies that life's problem has to do with man's environment alone. But what if there be another side to the problem? What if sin has done its strange work in the heart of man? What if the prophet is right, when he says: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." What saith Jesus: "Out of the heart of man"—not out of the heart of social circumstances, but "out of the heart of *man*—proceedeth evil thoughts." Make life's environment the very best possible. Enact laws that shall help man to a higher life physically, mentally, morally and every other way. I do not believe the Church has done her full duty in this respect. With greater faith in God she ought to be a greater power than she is in restraining the forces of evil, in moulding and guiding public opinion, and in making the great principles of righteousness and justice more practical and acceptable than they are. But having made all these admissions the fact still remains that the greatest factor in the re-

generation of society is the regeneration of the individual. Growth comes, not by additions from without, but by the development of a principle within. Nature does not go out with a basket of leaves to hang them on the trees. She works from within, and then we have the opening bud and springing flower. In the last analysis the healthy growth of society must come through the healthy moral growth of the individual. Sin hath maimed man's life, and no change in social circumstances can grip sin's power. Welcome, waveless sea; but the ship needs the propelling power of the engine. Welcome life's best environment; but man needs the propelling power of the love of Christ. Love's power is supreme. Cold abstractions do not kindle. But when great principles wrap themselves around the fibres of the heart, man will do and dare for righteousness. Man needs the vision of the heart—the vision of love.

The vision of the heart moves the patriot. Mazzini lying in the prison of Savona on the banks of the Riviera, with a gold-finch for his only companion, with Tacitus, Byron, and the Bible as his only books, became aware of his great mission in the unification of his beloved Italy. Exiled because of his principles, driven from place to place upon the continent of Eur-

ope, his mail rifled by the English Government officials, hated by his enemies, betrayed by his confidants, forsaken by his friends, he counted not his life dear unto him. But following the vision of the patriot's heart he quickened the spirit of democracy, and gave a splendid uplift to the cause of justice and humanity.

The vision of the heart moves the parent. Love pours itself into child-life, as the sunshine into flowers, until it "hoards, hides, immensity of sweetness." Beautiful beyond the dream of artist is the love of a mother for her child. Supremely beautiful was the home of Madame Quinet and her son in the valley of the Alps, an "ocean of grass, and broom, and brushwood, hidden like a nest in the centre of apple trees, cherries, walnuts, poplars and acacias." Beautiful, the Alps only a few miles away flashing the sunlight to the valley. But beautiful beyond the touch of nature or of artist is the picture of the sweet-souled mother, praying with her little child amid the blossomed fruit trees and the flowers. In "the field, in the woods, in the orchard, in the garden, they talked with God and laid their hearts before Him.

How fine the insight of a mother's love, so pure, so strong, so unselfish! It knows no

sacrifice too great, no task too heavy. Love lavishes its best upon the object loved. Love lingers at the sick-bed, too great for sleep. Love pours itself out like a magnificent spendthrift to fill up the measure of another's life. Love sorrows over the follies of an erring child, weeping when the thoughtless laugh, forgiving when the world condemns, throwing wide the unbolted door that the wanderer may enter when others pass by with averted gaze. Love touches the rough into smooth, turns sour into sweet, chastens the thoughts, elevates the affections, beautifies the life, and is the very essence of the moral energy of man. It lays the foundation of the ideal home, is the guardian angel of its peace, and the nurse of all the manly virtues.

The vision of the heart moves the philanthropist. Easy to illustrate. How long the roll-call of those who following the heavenly vision have gone forth in the spirit of the Master to minister to the suffering, the sorrowing, and the sinning. What are our hospitals, asylums, social settlements and charitable institutions but the heart's vision fixed in form? What sent Dr. Barnado into London slums; Jane Addams into Hull House, Chicago; Mrs. Ballington Booth into United States' prisons; Archbishop Machray into our own lone

Rupert's Land; and the great army of Christian workers into the highways and the byways of human life but the vision of the heart? Intellect alone has never produced the highest type of character. Love hath inspiration, insight, power. It gave lustre to the reign of Queen Victoria and roundness to the character of Gladstone. It is the secret of Tennyson's greatness. "A most restful, brotherly, solid-hearted man," says Carlyle; "a true human soul, to whom your own soul can say, brother." The child-like love of his noble personality, wedded to the manly strength of his intellect, found its way to the hearts of all classes and conditions of men. It drew forth the admiration of Samuel Bramford, the humble Lancashire weaver, as well as the admiration of the man Carlyle—philosopher and thinker. Intellect alone is ice. Facts that live only in the mind are cold. The Multiplication Table for the head; the Golden Rule for the heart. "The vital truths by which the souls of men live have been conveyed in poetic illustrations more frequently and fully than in scientific diagrams. Dante's 'Divine Comedia' has taught more than Euclid's Geometry." The great heart bears, like Atlas, the burden of the world upon his shoulders.

Auguste Comte founded his system of philosophy upon reason. Everything in life must be tested by cold, calculating intellect. But falling in love with Madame Clotilde De Vaux he discovered the inadequacy of his theories. Their friendship terminated at the close of one brief year, but in death they were not divided. Three times a day he invoked her memory; and every week he reverently visited her tomb. This new experience led him to revise his philosophy of life and to find a place therein for heart as well as head. Still later in life the heart that had surrendered to the love of another rebelled against his narrow, materialistic creed and he instituted a church, with its sacraments and saints, for the worship not of God but of deified humanity. It was the triumph of heart over the speculative side of the intellect. Following the vision he might have gone further, and discovered that love is the very essence of the character of God and of His governmental law.

The world needs all the intellect it can command. Reason is the gift of God as well as love, but the intellectual field will be barren of spiritual flower and fruitage unless fed from the fountain of the heart. The intellect has no redemptive power apart from love. It could not save Bacon from meanness, Rousseau from

vice, Goethe from worldiness, Napoleon from supreme selfishness, Byron from lust, and Greece and Rome from moral degradation. The intellect of Athens and of Rome was as cold as the marbles of Phidias. Education, legislation, literature, art, architecture, the wonder and admiration of centuries, could not vitalize the souls of men. We need not summon Seneca, Juvenal, Tacitus as witnesses of the moral foulness of their age. Read the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Listen to the verdict of Matthew Arnold:

> "On that hard pagan world disgust
> And secret loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell."

But Christ came to melt the icy indifference of man, to enrich the wealth of mind with the wealth of heart, and to bind the intellect with the golden chain of love.

Love gives the religion of Jesus place supreme among the religions of the world. It widens the moral horizon, gives vision to the prophet, rebukes sin, exalts righteousness, lifts the burdens and cheers the loneliness of life, and illuminates the darkness of the night of sin with the sunshine of the face of God. Why does the Brahmin priest, with proud disdain,

self-consciousness stamped upon every feature of his face, pass by the plague-smitten, starving millions of his fellow creatures, while Christianity feeds the hungry, ministers to the sick and to the dying, to the widow and to the orphan? Hindooism knows nothing of the love of God. It has a few dry moral maxims set in the frame-work of a subtle philosophy made venerable by antiquity, but it knows nothing of the Saviour's love that kindles and exalts. Indifference cannot live with the love of Christ. It moves the deadly torpor of humanity as melts the winter's frost beneath the April sun.

Well hath it been said that all power begins in heat, that the warm blood within the veins means motion, that the forces of the earth, the throb of the sea, the currents of air, the power that builds the hills and shapes the coal, turns winter into summer and night into day are derived from the burning sun. Does not the same writer note that every great thought had its birth in the passion of some soul, a golden ingot cooled down from the white heat of the enthusiasm of the past, that all art is enthusiasm moulded into shape, that poetry is the white heat of the heart's passion, that painting is enthusiasm flung upon the canvas, and that the grand cathedrals of the old world are the

petrified pulse-beats of the moral and religious life of man. With the temperature at zero we may imitate, but we cannot originate. Man will not do and dare for righteousness until he is lifted by a great enthusiasm. All that is best in human life to-day has come molten through the heart-flames of men and women, who have felt the burden, the responsibility, the greatness of life.

> "Infinite passion and the pain
> Of finite hearts that yearn."

False is the tendency that exalts intellect at the expense of heart. Plato and Homer and many of the intellectually great have a place in the calendar of positivism, the philosophy of Comte, but there is no place for the Man Christ Jesus. N. Dwight Hillis calls attention to the famous painting of Delaroche in the French Academy, in which the artist thrones intellect over heart. The great thinkers of the ages are there, but there is no place for the great hearts that have borne the burdens and the sorrows of the world. In the estimation of the artist they were unworthy to stand with the sons of genius. In the judgment of many to-day intellect is supreme. Prayer is oft treated with contempt. The longing of the heart for

God is weakness and religious enthusiasm is a sort of madness. Cultivate enthusiasm in business, in politics, in speculation, but send the religious thermometer down to zero, until the pew becomes a refrigerator and the pulpit becomes icily dignified. God pity the pulpit that knows no enthusiasm in the preaching of the Cross. God pity the pew that cannot thrill with the story of the Christ. Where there is no vision there is no enthusiasm. Truly hath it been said that a single sermon has been known to convert three thousand men; but with the lower spiritual temperature it takes three thousand sermons to convert one man. The need of the hour is heart vision, passionate conviction, vital experience, and character that is real. The message for a sinning, sorrowing world must come straight from the soul that has sinned and suffered, but has been redeemed by the heart-blood of the Son of God. It is not an essay, but a Gospel; not a recitation, but a revelation; not the negations of the Higher Criticism, but the fervent, intelligent utterance of one who has found Christ in experience, and who is not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.

It is a law in mechanics that the momentum, or force of a moving body is proportioned to the mass multiplied into the velocity. A smaller

projectile driven by a greater velocity will do the work of a larger one that moves more slowly. True in mechanics, it is also true in ethics. The man who hurls himself with energy and enthusiasm against the opposing forces of evil will be more efficient than the man of greater talents, but lacking in spiritual power. Erasmus had greater talents than Luther; but Luther had the velocity the enthusiasm, the spiritual progressiveness, the rush, the momentum that nothing could resist. Intellectual orthodoxy shattered the arguments of English Deism in the eighteenth century, but failed to touch the character and conduct of the people. Religion was emptied of its proper conduct. Morality was stricken with the plague of profligacy. Bishop Butler stormed the citadel of English thought. But Wesley and Whitfield stormed the citadel of the heart. Truth took possession of the men. It became a passion, an enthusiasm. Behind their words there was power irresistible and thousands were brought to the feet of the Son of God.

The great heart stands behind every miracle of reform, every uplift of humanity. Behind prison reform stands Howard. Behind emancipation is Wilberforce. Behind the Reformation is Luther. Behind the character of

Augustine is the loving heart of Monica. But behind Christianity is the loving heart of Christ.

Rev. David Watson tells the story of a well-known clergyman in Edinburgh, who met a little girl carrying in her arms a very heavy child. The task was far beyond her strength, but bravely and cheerfully she struggled with the burden.

"Is that little child not far too heavy for you?" he asked.

"Oh, no," she replied with a smile, "for he's ma' brither."

Love lightens the burden. It knows no task too heavy, no sacrifice too great.

> "For all love greatens and glorifies,
> Till God's aglow to the loving eyes,
> In what was mere earth before."

Be not disobedient to the heavenly vision—the vision of the heart.

III.

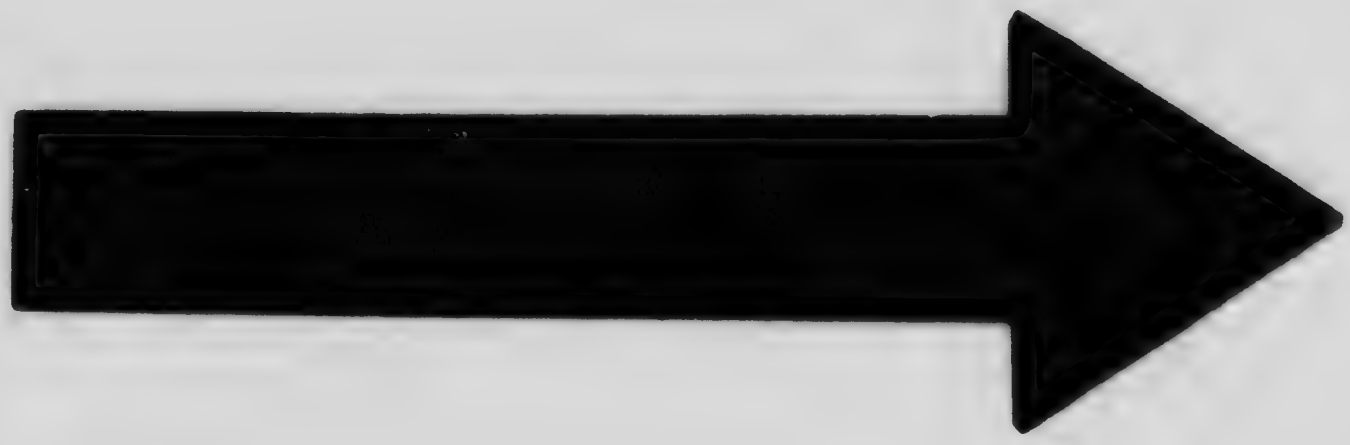
THE VISION OF THE SOUL.

THE vision of the Christ is not primarily intellectual. It is a vision of the soul—a vision of faith. Faith is rational, but reason is not limited to rules and demonstrations. Faith goes hand-in-hand with knowledge, but there is a larger knowledge than a mere intellectual acquaintance with the facts of Christianity. A knowledge of anatomy is not necessary to the running of a race, nor a knowledge of physiology to the enjoyment of a dinner. There is a joy of sunlight and of flowers apart from botany and astronomy. And the joy of fellowship with Jesus may exist apart from an intellectual grip of the science of theology. Creed has its place. Doctrine has its value. Man is rational as well as religious. Religion ought to be rooted and grounded in intelligent conviction. But faith is deeper than speculation. Experience precedes creed as stars precede astronomy. Christian experience is the soul's vision of the Christ, whose portrait hangs in the picture gallery of the Word.

"Paint me a likeness of the Saviour," said the Emperor Constantine to Eusebius.

Eusebius replied: "If you would have a likeness of Him what better can I give you than the one painted by Himself, and you will find it in the Gospels."

The Christ of history looks out from every page of the Gospels, revealing a character infinitely strong because infinitely tender—a character stainless, flawless, purer than Parian marble. To the charm of the character of Jesus the heart frequently surrenders even when the head denies His divinity. "He is a superhuman miracle," says Keim, the rationalist. "He is more than a human being," says Channing, the Unitarian. How lovingly Strauss lingers over the beauty of His life. "He remains the highest model of religion within the reach of our thought, and no perfect piety is possible without His presence in the heart." Renan reduces Him to the level of a man, but he closes his task with a glowing tribute to His worth. "Whatever the unexpected phenomena of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will continually renew its youth, the legend of his life will bring ceaseless tears, his sufferings will soften the best hearts; all the ages will proclaim that among the sons of man none has been born greater than Jesus."



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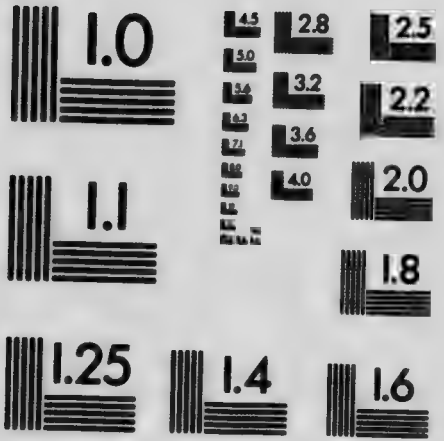

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But Jesus cannot be classified with the world's great. We may speak of Washington the Great, of Wellington the Great, of Gladstone the Great; but "who would speak of Jesus the Great? Jesus is apart. He is not the Great. He is the Only. He is simply Jesus." It is hard to understand how any one can study the character of Jesus without receiving this impression. He towers above us in His sinlessness. He awes. He subdues. He convinces of sin. He reveals Himself as Saviour. How softening and mellowing in their influence upon character are His beautiful sayings. Like music they subdue us to a finer quality, and then uplift us upon the wings of aspiration. They are as balm to the aching heart, as the cool evening breeze to the fevered brow. Surrendering to His will Jesus so satisfies the deepest needs of life that the great truth is borne in upon the soul: "Thou hast the words of life eternal." The Christ of experience thus confirms the Christ of history. "The historical seals the spiritual; the spiritual signs the historical;" and both bring to the soul an assurance of the love of God that higher criticism can no more affect than the study of biology can affect a man's existence. Christian experience is vital. It is not blind feeling. It is knowledge. It is life.

"How do you know that Christ is a reality?" asked an agnostic of an uneducated Christian.

"Because I know that He has saved me," was the simple reply.

"But how do you know that He has saved you?" persisted his questioner.

"Because I was there when the deed was done," was the unexpected answer.

It was an uneducated man's appeal to the changed life, to the consciousness of unity with God through Jesus Christ. Rend a man's creed; but you cannot rend his experience. Shatter his opinions; but you cannot shatter his convictions. The man whose sight Jesus had restored could not argue with his Pharisaic tormentors, but he could cling to the fact of restored vision. The little child could not tell the degree of sweetness of the honey he was tasting, but lifting up the well-filled jar he could say: "There it is, father, taste it for yourself." Oh, taste and see that God is good." To taste is to see, to see is to experience, to experience is to know. "This is life eternal that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Nothing has ever moved man like the vision of the soul. It has influenced the thought and feeling of the ages. It has been thrown upon the canvas, and chiselled into marble. It lives

in the paintings of the masters, the Madonnas of Raphael, the splendid art of Angelo, in the great cathedrals of the Old World, "petrified pulse-beats of religious enthusiasm," as Dr. Parkhurst calls them. Every spire pointing heavenward, and every chime of bell summoning the worshipper from the world's great care to rest and peace, are witnesses to its worth. The hymns that we sing are "golden ingots" cooled down from the white heat of spiritual experience. They are the soul's vision fixed in song. They abide in freshness and in power, whilst sectarian shibboleths are passing from the earth. Little interest have we in Toplady's controversial fierceness, but when shall we grow weary of his

"Rock of ages cleft for me"?

Saint Bernard, the Crusader, may be forgotten, but when will the Church forget him as the author of

"Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts"?

The well known hymn of Cardinal Newman is a greater monument to his memory than the part he played in the Oxford movement. The soul following the gleam still sings of the leading of the light.

I knew a young man who started out upon the Christian life with vision bright. But clouds gathered, temptations came, the moral ideal seemed to fade, and life lost something of its glory and its loveliness. One night he entered a church and the choir sang:

"Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on."

He knew nothing of the author of the hymn except the name. But they were singing of the burden of his own life and the words thrilled and throbbed through heart and brain while through his tears he sang:

"So long thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

Friendless and alone—yet not alone, for God was with him—he went out into the darkness of the night, climbed the stairway to his room, fought the battle of his doubt upon his knees, and into his life there came the healing of the light of Jesus.

Thank God for the soul's vision; for those moments of insight, inspiration, uplift that are

worth more than days, or weeks, or years at other times.

"Oh! we're sunk enough here, God knows!
But not quite so sunk that moments
Sure, though seldom, are denied us,
When the spirit's true endowments
Stand out plainly from its false ones,
And apprise it if pursuing
Or the right way or the wrong way,
To its triumph or undoing."

It may be but the touch of a vanished hand or the sound of a voice that is still. It may be but the passing of a sunset, the fading of a flower, the tolling of a bell, the preaching of a sermon, gentle strains of music, or a friend's advice, and better thoughts are awakened that lead us up to God. There are times when some familiar verse unlocks its secret, brings us face to face with unseen realities, and touches the soul to finer issues. Augustine found Jesus while reading the words: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh." St. Francis found Him upon a sick bed, and arising renewed in body and in soul, he went forth to a life of poverty and of charity. The vision came to Luther on a pilgrimage to Rome. To Wesley it came as he worshipped in Fetter's Lane chapel. To Christ-

mas Evans as he wrestled by the roadside, Nathanael-like, in prayer. Time would fail me to tell of those who, seeing the vision, have gone forth, like Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, to pursue the Holy Quest. There have been many knightly Sir Galahads, and many like the sister of Sir Percival. The pure in heart have seen God, and the vision has led them forth to deeds of noble self-sacrifice. It took Carey to India, Livingstone to Africa, McKay to Formosa, Judson to Burmah, Morrison to China, Keith Falconer to Arabia, McKenzie to Korea. The brilliant Fanny Forrester turned her back upon fame and fortune to become a missionary of the Cross. Florence Nightingale ministered to the dying upon the battle-field. Thousands whom the world has never known have followed in loving self-sacrifice the vision of the soul.

In the war between the United States and Spain Hobson sank the *Merrimac* in the harbor of Santiago in the face of the enemy's guns. This brave deed of a brave man was heralded to the world. About the same time Lieutenant Blue took his rifle on his shoulder, climbed the hills around the harbor, passed through the Spanish lines, counted their ships and returned. It was an equally brave deed,

but the public scarcely heard of it. Some there are who fill the public eye, but many of our greatest heroes are unknown. They are found in the office, in the market, in the home, contending with life's temptations and life's trials, but holding fast by faith and duty, following the vision of the soul. The world may not know them. But the angels see them. God whispers His secret to their hearts, as they bravely struggle for the right. Their worth can be known only in the light of the great white throne.

How beautiful is such a life!

How beautiful is the progress of the sun through the heavens, counting the hilltops, touching earth into life and gladness, ripening fruit, painting flowers, and blessing the with its benediction and its smile. But infi grander is the progress through life of a touched with the sunlight of the love of God, shedding its radiance upon the darkness of the world, bringing comfort, help and healing to others in sorrow and in sin.

Some of the greatest intellects have reverently followed the vision of the soul. Cromwell took his Bible into the House of Commons. Lincoln prayed to the God of battles. Professor Morse asked God for light upon his experi-

ments. Gladstone's greatness is inseparable from his faith in Christ. It is said that while waiting to deliver his first budget speech in 1853 his mind was dwelling upon the words: "O, turn thou unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid." Witnesses innumerable bid us follow the leading of the light. Let not the world blot out the vision of the soul.

> "For I say, this is death and the sole death,
> When a man's loss comes to him from his gain,
> Darkness from light, from knowledge ignorance,
> And lack of love from love made manifest."

Jenny Lind, the sweet Swedish singer, was asked why she left the stage. She was sitting upon the beach, with a Bible in her hand, looking across the water at the glory of a sunset.

"I left the stage," she replied, "because it made me forget this"—pointing to her Bible; "and that"—pointing to the sunset. The world was shutting out the vision of the soul, and she could not endure the hidden Face of God.

The child dreads not the rod so much as the averted gaze of the parent. The greatest punishment in life is the loss of spiritual vision,

the lowering of the ideal, the blunting of conscience, the dulling of the finer sensibilities, the loss of fellowship with Christ. To gain the knowledge of the world at the expense of truth is infinitely sad. To feel oneself slipping out of sweet feeling, and of childhood's faith into soilure, sin, and doubt is the tragedy of life. How touching the melancholy strains of Thomas Hood:

> "I remember, I remember,
> The fir trees dark and high;
> I used to think their slender tops
> Were close against the sky:
> It was a childish ignorance,
> But now 'tis little joy
> To know I'm further off from heaven
> Than when I was a boy."

Cherish the vision of faith. It is the magnetic needle of the soul pointing heavenward. The mariner's compass was known to the Chinese long before the days of Columbus. But they knew it as a childish toy and not as a magnificent instrument of navigation. Columbus made it the means of great voyage and discovery. Trusting it he ventured forth from land, and made the Old World rich with the treasures of the New. Trust the compass of thy faith in God and Christ. Venture forth from land be-

yond the realm of sight. As strange birds, floating logs and twigs told Columbus of a continent, so on life's great voyage there are many indications that

> **"The best is yet to be,**
> **The best of life for which**
> **The first was planned."**

We are on a voyage of discovery. Let faith reach forth her hand and enrich the present with the treasures of the unseen. Be not disobedient to the heavenly vision—the vision of the soul.

IV.

THE VISION OF THE MORAL NATURE.

THE vision of the mind is progress, of the heart love, of the soul faith; but the vision of the moral nature of duty. Someone has said that conscience is a private watch set to the time of the country in which one happens to live. Did the critic learn in experience what he taught in epigram? Yet truly he was wide the mark. Conscience is universal and unerring in its accuracy, bidding man do the right and shun the wrong. It is the consciousness of duty, the sense of moral obligation, that sets man apart. The cow's heaven is the meadow. The horse's is the well-filled stall. They are "finished and finite clods untroubled by a spark" of divine consciousness. But the vision of the moral nature, sublimer far than the vision of the starry heavens, reveals the divinity of man. Be not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

Obedience is the mother of vision. Following the leading of the light each poet, painter, prophet has come unto his own. The youth Rembrandt was set to work in his father's mill, but he did not work; he drew pictures in the dust. He was sent to school, but he would not

study; he drew pictures everywhere. In vain the teacher flogged and the father scolded. The lad persisted in obeying the vision of the artist, and to-day lovers of art pronounce Rembrandts priceless.

Behind the "Angelus"—dream of piety and prayer—is the story of Millais. We see him on the streets of Paris, a bearded boy with bronzed face, shaggy locks, bony hands, and awkward gait. But from the calm depths of those great grey eyes the soul of the artist looked out upon the world. Jostled upon the streets, laughed at by the thoughtless, robbed of his money, seeking the Louvre with its wealth of art, living in a Paradise before the paintings of Raphael and Rubens, following the artist's vision he paid the price of poverty, grim and fearful, ere the world recognized the greatness of his art.

Familiar to the student of Browning is the story of those days of dreamy wonder and delight under the great elms of a London suburb. The clouds, the mist, the driving fog, the cross of St. Paul's flashing in the golden sunset, and the incoherent sounds of human voices, borne by the west winds across the wastes of London, and re-echoed by the great trees under which he lay, stirred his imagination; and following the

poet's dream he paid the price of public neglect for thirty years ere the age recognized him as "the subtlest assertor of the soul in song."

Beautiful the story of St. Francis of Assisi, the youth of mirth, of festival, of jewelled splendor. In a dream he saw a many storied palace, whose chambers were filled with banners, arms and shields marked with the cross of Christ.

"They are for thee and for thy knights," said a voice.

Interpreting the dream as a divine call to arms in behalf of the Church he went forth under the Count of Assisi to win laurels upon the battle-field. But again God called him in a dream:

"Francis, who can make thee the better knight, the Master or the servant?"

"The Master, not the servant," said Francis.

"But thou art leaving the Master for the servant," replied the voice.

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" prayed Francis.

"Turn thee back to thine own land," the voice replied; "for the vision thou didst see meant heavenly, not earthly, equipment. It shall be given thee of God and not of man." Obeying the vision Francis went forth to a

life of poverty and charity, sacrificing wealth and rank, parents and friends, enduring hardships many and sufferings severe. With apostolic fervor he ministered to the suffering, the sorrowing and the sad. He became brother to the leper and the beggar. The world shouted, "madman." His father cursed him for his folly. But through obedience he became a prophet to his age.

Truly through obedience man comes unto his own. Had Browning disobeyed he would have remained a bank clerk. Had Millais disobeyed he would have buried his splendid talents beneath the painter of ships and wagons. Had Rembrandt disobeyed he would have remained a common workman in his father's mill. St. Francis would never have emerged from Assisi, and St. Paul would have gone nameless to the grave had they failed in the hour of duty. Through disobedience life falls asunder, and the soul passes into the shadow of the night. Through unfaltering obedience life finds unity, and the soul greets the morning and the cheer and charm of day. It is not enough to dream dreams and see visions. The right impulse must be translated into life. Faith without works is dead. Love without duty is weakness. Religion without morality is unreal. Emotion

untranslated into action will burn itself out until naught remains but cold grey ashes. The dream of truth that never finds expression in life becomes life's falsehood.

> "What so false as truth is
> False to thee?"

Jesus has given us the test: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Religion is good; so is salt and sunshine. But of what value is salt if it has lost its savor? Of what value is sunshine if we draw the curtain and shut it out? Of what value is religion if it has lost the salt and the sunshine of obedience? Hold fast by duty. Keep close to the moralities. When conscience speaks obey. When the hand of duty is upon thee say, with the prophet, "Here am I, send me." Do the right, even though the right may seem to wrong thee. And if around thee fall the shadows of the night of doubt still hold by duty, and the very doubt may lead to vision.

Fitting illustration is the case of Robertson, of Brighton. Doubt shattered his evangelical creed, but he clung close to the fact of duty. "If there be no God," he reasoned, "even then it is better to be generous than selfish, chaste than licentious, true than false, brave

than cowardly." It was a feeble ray, the shining of the star of duty in the vast night of uncertainty, but he followed the gleam and it led him to the dawning and the day; and from that great soul where dwelt intellect, vision, fine feeling and religious fervor the light of truth was flashed to others, as the mountain crest flashes the sunlight to the distant valley.

Hold fast by duty, for character comes not by inspiration but by ceaseless toil. When someone asked Edison the secret of his success he replied: "Hard work." "Do your inventions come by inspiration?" persisted the questioner. "No," was the reply, "but by perspiration." Without agreeing with Carlyle's saying that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains, we may well admit the value of such capacity. Edison spent from eighteen to twenty hours daily for seven months compelling the phonograph to reproduce the letter *s*. St. Beuve, the great literary critic, toiled terribly. Kant rose at five o'clock for thirty years. Dickens was noted for his untiring industry. Michael Angelo would spend a whole week in perfecting a muscle in a statue. La Place took forty years to map out the heavens. Stevenson's finished style is the result of ceaseless practice. And patient and persistent

effort made Tennyson the master of foot and line and rhyme. Men find it necessary to bestow infinite pains upon the perfection of a book, a statue, a poem, an invention, but somehow they think that character may be produced with but little effort. We cannot will character into existence. We must work it out. As Robert Falconer says, in one of George McDonald's novels, "Truth is not to be known, save by absolute contact with it, and the sole guide in the direction of it must be duty. I can imagine no other possible conductor. We must do before we can know." Knowledge comes through obedience. "If any man will do His will he shall know." Faith grows through exercise. Love grows through expenditure of love. To crown faith and love with duty is to follow in the footsteps of prophets and apostles and of all the truth-loving souls in all ages of the world. Nay, more, it is to follow in the footsteps of the Master, who "came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Christ's way was the way of obedience. "Though He were a son, yet learned He obedience through the things which He suffered." His was not the way of the sunlit plain, where flowers bloom and poets dream, but the way of

the Cross, and the thorns, and the rough north wind. He passed through the night of Gethsemane, where the air was heavy with the breath of sorrow as He wrestled in the shadow and the gloom. In the twilight of the morning, at Pilate's judgment bar, the world hissed its opposition and its scorn. He climbed the rugged slope of Golgotha and braved the nail-prints and the spear-thrust, the worm wood and the gall. He went down into the valley of the shadow that was cold and chill, and wet with the tears of humanity. But from the lonely grave on which

"The Syrian stars looked down"

Jesus came forth in resurrection splendor, revealing Himself to men and teaching them to obey the vision heavenly.

What is Christ to any man unless he thrones Him in his life? What is Gethsemane to any man without the wrestling of prayer? What is Pilate's judgment bar to us unless we are willing to brave the opposition of the world rather than deny our Lord? The Cross is naught unless by it we are crucified unto the world and the world unto us. The empty grave is meaningless unless we rise with Jesus and walk in the light of faith and love and duty.

Jesus summons us to a life of obedience, a life of service, and washing the disciples feet He has taught us that the divinest service may be the lowliest.

Somewhere have I read the story of the knight who rode forth on steed, gaily caparisoned, to valiant service. He had not ridden far when he met a woman in distress.

"Help me, Sir Knight, to find my child; he is lost in the forest and the night is cold."

"Not so," he replied; "some lesser knight can find your child. I ride forth to knightly conquest."

Later when the winds were sharp and keen, and the snow lay deep upon the earth, he met a blind man wandering upon the moor.

"Help me, Sir Knight, to reach the nearest village. Blind am I and the winds are cold and keen."

"Not so," he replied; "some humbler squire can assist you. I must accomplish something great."

Onward he rode, following the phantom greatness, but after years of fruitless quest he returned to his castle a weary, disappointed man.

Following the dream of something great we

are oft blinded to the plainest duties of the hour. We forget that the exalted duty of to-morrow comes through the humbler duty of to-day. The man who does not fill worthily the lower office is not fitted for the higher. The apprentice must ever precede the master workman.

Duty means safety. It is the idler whom Satan tempts. "All these years Jesus has held me," says Jerry McAulay, "but I don't know now but what I'd have fallen again if I hadn't been so busy holding on to others."

Duty means reward. Jesus assures us that even the giving of a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple shall not go unrewarded. Silas Marner shelters a little hungry child that came to him out of the darkness and the snow. Years afterwards he discovered that in this simple act of duty there was embodied a treasure of inestimable worth.

Duty means character crowned with perfection. Is the way long? It is a long way from the seed to the flower. But when it appears how the eye feasts upon its beauty. The sunlight painted it. The hands of the angels touched it into beauty. And there it is with its fragrance, sweetness, smile, whispering its

message to a faithless, doubting world. But character perfected in Jesus will be purer than the lily, more glorious than the laurel, more beautiful than the Amaryllis. Infinite variety! Amaranthine splendor! Deathless charm! Is the way long? The prize is in the process. Be not disobedient to the heavenly vision—the vision of the moral nature.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FACT OF IMMORTALITY.

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"If a man die, shall he live again?—Job 14. 14.
"I am the Resurrection and the Life."—John 11. 25.

MAN instinctively turns towards the thought of immortality as the needle towards the magnet, as the earth towards the sun, for man has within himself powers, possibilities, and longings that would fain lead him beyond death, darkness, and the grave. Blot out the thought of immortality, and while some of the finer souls would doubtless cling to conscience as the ground of moral conduct, there would be an awful rending of the moral code. Matthew Arnold, who did not believe in a personal God, but only in "a power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness," and who saw, in sceptical fancy, "the sea of faith retreating to the breath of the night winds," could nevertheless say:

"Hath man no second life?
Pitch this one high!"

Robertson, of Brighton, standing on the verge of despair and of doubt, with his evan-

gelical creed shattered at his feet, could still believe that even if there were no God and no future state it were better that a man should do his best. But there is little doubt that the effect upon the average man would be appalling. If death's grim night lead not to the golden gates of dawn, then aspiration weakens, enthusiasm departs, confidence is impaired, conscience loses its grip, and the distinction between right and wrong suffers irreparable loss. If, after all the struggle and the promise and the pain, this life is to reach "the tragic anti-climax of a burnt-out star," reason would be staggered at the unreasonableness of creation, and moral progress would become impossible. Reason demands immortality. Conscience claims it. But Jesus Christ affirms it.

"If a man die, shall he live again?"

"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

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Reason demands immortality, and bases its demand upon the universality of the idea. The current of belief in a future state has ever flowed through the channels of human thought. The Hebrews had their Paradise. The Greeks had their Elysian fields. Mythology represents Charon as ferrying the souls of the dead over Stygian waters. Isis and Osiris sit in the

judgment halls of death, weighing the merits of the souls of the departed. The Norseman sang of his Valhalla, the palace of immortality. The Indian, bold child of the forest, had his happy hunting ground. The thought of immortality lives in monument and pyramid, in sarcophagus and storied urn, and has found expression in painting, in sculpture and in song. It is a silent witness to the fact that man is not the product of mere force, and that he shall not mingle with the elements, to know no more of feeling, of action and of thought. There is that within the soul that revolts against the mere suggestion that "this sensible, warm motion should become a kneaded clod." The cry of the human heart finds expression in the language of the poet:

> "Thou wilt not leave us in the dust,
> Thou madest man he knows not why;
> He thinks he was not made to die;
> And Thou hast made him, Thou art just."

The desire for immortality is universal, and universality is the pledge of truth.

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Reason demands immortality, and bases its demand upon individual aspiration after life eternal.

Man loves life. He clings to it with

passionate desire that grows with the passing of the years, with the uplifting of the race, and with an increasing knowledge of life's possibilities and powers. And is it not significant that many of the intellectually great have frankly admitted that, with the departure of their faith in a Personal God, there has departed something of the glory and the loveliness of life? Professor Romanes, the brilliant Cambridge scholar, longingly looked back to the hallowed glory of the creed that once was his. Darwin declared it to be an intolerable thought, that man, and all sentient beings, should be doomed to complete annihilation. Professor Huxley wrote to Mr. Morley that he found his dislike to the thought of extinction increasing with the passing of years. "It flashes across me at times with a sort of horror," he goes on to say, "that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800."

Oft is it foolishly imagined that only faith can be disturbed by doubt; but a thousand things may disturb our unbelief. The restless sea, tossing like a weary, tired world, may suggest the mystery of existence. The fading of a flower, the falling of a leaf, the face of death, the aching heart, the tear-stained coffin, may

awaken heart-hunger and the cry: "If a man die, shall he live again?"

> "Just when we are safest, there's a sunset touch,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> A fancy from a flower-bell, someone's death,
> And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
> To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
> Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,
> Round the ancient idol, on its base again,—
> The Grand Perhaps!"

What is the cause of this disturbance? Does the needle point towards the pole? Magnetism is the cause. Does the earth revolve around the sun? Gravitation is the cause. Astronomers observed certain irregularities in the movements of the planet Uranus. "What was the disturbing cause?" They answered, the attraction of an unknown planet. Professor Adams, of Cambridge University, made his calculations and located the attracting mass. Leverrier, the great French astronomer, confirmed his calculations. Then Dr. Galle turned the great refracting telescope of Berlin Observatory upon that part of the heavens, and lo! Neptune, seventy-six times larger than the earth, appeared. Planet reaches unto planet across the trackless space. And something there is that, reaching across the years, is lifting our thoughts into the far-off future and

troubling the soul with the most daring dream of life continued beyond the grave. What is that something? Reason answers, immortality. To quote from Dr. Gregg: "Human nature hungers for immortality with a divine and deathless famine. This hunger, this desire, was put there by God, and it is a prophecy of that which shall satisfy it. God must fulfil His prophecies. He always does. Owen, the naturalist, finds a fossil five hundred feet under ground. He says the animal lived on the surface of the earth. How does he know? Why, there are sockets for the eye. Nature makes nothing in vain. It must have lived where the light was. The world says that is logic. Now in man we find a yearning, a desire, a hope for immortality. Can you believe that God, who made the waters for the web-foot and light and beauty for the eye, has forgotten the soul? Addison's Cato frames the argument with which we are dealing:

"'Plato, thou reasonest well,
Else whence this pleasing hope? this fond desire
This longing for immortality?

. . . . . .

'Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself pointing out an hereafter,
And intimating eternity in man.'"

Reason demands immortality, and bases its demand upon the incompleteness of the present life. "The days of our years are three-score years and ten," says the Psalmist.

> "Twilight and evening bell,
> And after that the dark!"

But if that is all then man's mental and spiritual endowments are strangely out of proportion to the brief limit of his life. Can the possibilities of an acorn be crushed into an earthen jar? Is an ocean liner built to sail on river and bay? Can man, whose thoughts outrun the centuries and outsoar the planets, and whose moral nature hungers after God, be crowded into seventy years? No man can realize himself within so brief a limit. Darwin, feeling old age creeping upon him, but realizing his powers and possibilities for work, exclaimed: "If I could go on now with my head sixty years old, and my body twenty-five, I could accomplish something." Goethe, with the great intellect, went out of the world at eighty-three, saying: "Light, light, more light!" Victor Hugo at seventy said: "Winter is on my head and eternal spring is in my heart. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal sym-

phonies of inviting worlds. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse, but I feel that I have not said a thousandth part of what is in me." Cecil Rhodes, the empire builder, relinquishes his herculean task with a sigh: "So much to do; so little done!" And what of the lives that could have accomplished great things, but were hindered? What possibilities of development have been checked by adverse circumstances? What of the powers that have been crippled by the lack of opportunity? Death plucks the blossoms and cuts the unripe grain that gave promise of rarest fruit and richest harvest. Many of life's best things—aspirations, hopes, yearnings, and affections—have been buried with the years.

A friend of mine—a young giant in strength and stature—the hero of many a well contested football field—struggled perseveringly in the face of financial difficulties until he reached the year of college graduation. The horizon was widening to his life's work in the ministry, but

"God's finger touched him and he slept."

Here is another, an only son, athletic form, keen-eyed, brow intellectual. Before him was

Harvard and a bright career in law. But the grave opened at his feet and youth and talent were swallowed up therein.

Life is full of such tragedies. Shelley weeps for Adonais. Tennyson mourns for Arthur Hallam. Matthew Arnold laments for Arthur Clough. Milton sings the memory of Edward King. What promise of greatness! What a sense of incompleteness! Man feels that he cannot here attain unto his best. His reach exceeds his grasp. He paints a little in the background of the picture. He writes the preface to life's volume. He strikes only the C major—the common chord of life—so sober and prosaic. And if there is no future, where life's picture is completed, life's volume finished, and where life's discordant notes are gathered up into harmony, then what is the meaning of man's mental and moral equipment? If science has established anything it is the law of the conservation of energy. There is not an animal that dies upon the roadside but nature—rigid economist that she is—sets herself to the task of liberating the forces stored up in bone and tissue and of reproducing them in other forms. Is there an economy of force, and shall thought and emotion yield to the ravages of death? Shall the soul be measured

by the limits of the finite and go out at death as a lamp goes out when its wick burns low? Shall man, with the immeasurable possibilities of heart and brain, find no place beyond the grave for life's completion? Then life is a mockery and a cheat. Its issues are not reasonable, and man is betrayed by the deceptive promise of his own greatness.

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The demand of reason for immortality is supported by the claim of conscience, which is based upon the injustice and the wrongs of life. Dowered with a sense of justice man feels life's inequalities. He sees the innocent suffer with the guilty. The seeds of sorrow are sown in the constitution of the little child, victim of a parent's sin. In the green tree of youth is the ambushed flame of passion kindled by heredity. The world is full of suffering. The victims of oppression are everywhere. Justice is oft perverted. Right is not always crowned. Truth is not always throned. Low cunning often lords it over virtue and the unprincipled may succeed where patient merit with the high ideal fails. For failure it is if there is to be no striking of a balance, no settling of accounts.

What a travesty of justice it will be if man,

giving himself in self-sacrifice to uplift humanity, shall never "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Shall Paul never see the harvest of the seed his hand has sown? Shall blind Handel never see the Messiah of whom he has so grandly sung? Shall deaf Beethoven, whose soul was as a finely attuned instrument, never hear "the grandest of all masters of harmony—above, above!" Shall Livingstone not know of the answer to his prayer for the healing of the open sore of Africa? Shall the great heart of Bishop Hannington not survive the bullet of a savage? Shall General Gordon be annihilated by the spear-thrust of an Arab foe? Was it all a delusion when that great soul nourished his faith with the thought of immortality, and sang with Paracelsus:

> "I go to prove my soul!
> I see my way, as birds their trackless way,
> In some time, His good time, I shall arrive.
> He guides me and the bird."

Such a conclusion does violence to the conscience and outrages man's sense of justice. Man has within himself the instinct of good government and all through the ages he has been working out this orderly principle. And are we to believe that there is no orderly purpose in the universe? Or are we not rather to

believe that the instinct of justice and of order in a man's own soul can find its explanation only in the moral government of God? Out of the darkness of the night of injustice and of wrong the soul that trusts in God shall yet pass into the sunlight of immortality, where all mysteries shall be solved in the light of the Father and the Son. Reason demands it. Conscience claims it. The soul's struggle for righteousness is meaningless,

"Unless the fruit of victories
Stay one and all, stored up and guaranteed its own
Forever, ...
Death reads the title clear
What each soul for itself conquers from out things here."

. . . . . .

Thank God for all the arguments in favor of immortality. But let us confess that though there are many indications that man is

"The heir of hopes too fair to turn out false,"

yet the arguments from reason are not fully satisfying. The logical processes do not bring the assurance that man would like. He is ever testing them. He is ever afraid that they may fail. It is possible, too, that we may unconsciously inject into rational arguments the strength of Christian thinking, thus making them appear stronger than they really are. If

we would see how far reason can carry man in the direction of immortality we must look back of Christianity. The belief in a future life, as already noted, has ever been strong, steady, universal. But how crude was its conception even among the Hebrews. And in the pagan world this grandest thought was wrapped in the mummy-swathings of endless imbecilities. But Jesus has brought immortality to light by the Gospel. Divinity comes close to humanity. The smiling Face of God looks through the darkness and the gloom, as Christ declares Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life. Under the shadow of the Cross and by the empty grave faith sings the hosannahs of immortality. Then every argument of reason glows with the fire of divine truth and every analogy from nature breaks forth into speech. From seed, and bulb, and flower, and plant, and chrysalis ten thousand voices echo the question of the great apostle: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead?" That the resurrection is a mystery we admit. That it cannot be explained we readily grant. But why should we seek to explain it? Is it not enough that Jesus has risen from the dead, and "them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The

butterfly breaking from the chrysalis is a fact, but who can explain it? The Easter lily is a fact, but who can understand it? He who says to the butterfly, "Arise in all thy beauty;" and to the Easter lily, "Come forth in all thy loveliness," can say to the dead in Christ, "Come forth in all thy resurrection splendor" Why should it be thought a thing incredible? Christ is "risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

"Death, death!" says Browning. "It is this harping on death I despise so much. Never say of me that I am dead."

"My tomb is not a blind alley," says Victor Hugo, "but a thoroughfare. It closes with the twilight to open with the dawn."

Emerson questioned the secrets of the grave, and looking up he found his answer in "the spotless orange light of the morning beaming up from the dark hills into the wide universe."

"When I fall and am buried in Greenwood," says Beecher, "let no man dare stand over the turf and say, 'Here lies Henry Ward Beecher,' for God knows that I will not be there."

"Earth recedes and heaven opens before me," says Moody. "If this is death, there is nothing awful here. It is sweet. It is bliss. Do

not call me back. God is calling me and I must go."

"The hour strikes. Farewell! We shall meet again!" writes the dying Mozart to his wife.

"Oh, death, where is thy sting!" says Paul.

"Because I live ye shall live also," says Jesus.

Jesus has stamped immortality upon the best thought of the world. He has changed argument into fact. In the light of the resurrection we may look up into the very Face of God and see manhood glorified, death robbed of its sting, and the grave of its victory. "Thy dead shall live again. Together with my dead body shall they come." We shall see them as they are. We shall see Him as He is. In the words of Browning's Easter Day:

> "Christ rises! mercy every way
> Is infinite."

In Him life's broken threads are united, earth's tears are dried, and the aching heart is satisfied.

A few years ago I stood by the grave of a little child. He was as dear to me as the red drops that warm my veins. And as I turned away, I blessed God for Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. I still see him in

my dreams. I still feel the touch of the vanished hand. I still hear the sound of the voice that is still. Let me dream my dreams. Let me see my visions. Let me feel love's vanished touch and hear love's silent voice until spirit meets spirit where parting is unknown.

You, too, dear reader, dream your dreams. You, too, see your visions. You, too, feel the touch of the hand that has vanished and hear the sound of the voice that has been stilled by death. Dream on, trust on, hope on, live on, love on, until time breaks, eternity begins, and all mysteries are solved.

"If a man die, shall he live again?"

"Yea," saith Jesus, "I am the Resurrection and the Life."